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# ISRAEL'S FOREIGN RELATIONS

SELECTED DOCUMENTS, 1977-1979

M. MEDZINI

Ministry for Foreign Affairs





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# **ISRAEL'S FOREIGN RELATIONS**

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VOLUME FOUR





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### 1977-1979

Editor: Meron Medzini

Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Jerusalem, 1981

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# INTRODUCTION

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*Volumes four and five of the series Israel's Foreign Relations are devoted almost exclusively to the negotiations that led to the signing of the Camp David Agreements and the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty. These volumes covers the first two years of the first Begin Administration (1977–1979). Perhaps more than ever, the documents presented here are essential for an understanding of the dramatic events that took place in the period under review. Although all the documents have been published before, they are brought together and placed in a historical context with the help of editorial notes placed before each one of them.*

*The documents appeared previously in various forms. Most of them were, in their original form, Press Bulletins issued by the Israel Government Press Office. Others were issued by the Press Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Yet others, primarily those covering press conferences with President Carter and Secretary of State Vance have appeared as Official Texts and were issued by the International Communication Agency of the United States of America in Tel Aviv.*

*Thanks are due to the staff of the English Publications Division of the Government Press Office for translating many of the documents from Hebrew to English. There has been virtually no editing of texts, and many of the documents are reproduced as they first appeared.*

*As in the previous volumes in this series, no effort has been made to impose on the different translations uniformity of style or even consistency of spelling. Hence, English and American spelling often interchange. With few exceptions, entire documents are reproduced. To the extent that excerpts were made, it is so indicated in the introduction to the documents.*

*Mrs. Yerma Medzini was again subjected to living through two years of documents, which she did with patience and understanding.*

*Jerusalem, July 1981*

*Meron Medzini*



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# HIGHLIGHTS OF MAIN EVENTS 1977–1978

## 1977

- 20 June Prime Minister Begin presents his government to the Knesset and wins a vote of confidence.
- 22 June Prime Minister Begin accepts an invitation by President Carter to visit Washington on 18-20 July.
- 27 June State Department spokesman reiterates Carter administration Middle East policy saying that Israel should negotiate withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza, among other items.
- 28 June Israel rejects implications of U.S. statement saying Israel is ready to negotiate every issue.
- 30 June President Carter suggests a three week “statement pause” on the Middle East prior to arrival of Begin.
- 6 July The U.S. rejects Israeli request to sell 24 Kfir fighter-bombers to Ecuador.
- 7 July Prime Minister Begin calls upon Arab leaders to join him in “political armistice” prior to going to a Geneva peace conference.
- 10 July Following Israeli complaints about Egyptian violations of the Sinai Interim Agreement, Egyptian War Minister Gamasy assures UN forces commander that Egypt will observe all the provisions of the agreement.
- 13 July Sadat says he will end the state of war with Israel only after complete Israeli withdrawal and will consider a peace treaty 5 years after last Israeli soldier leaves the territories.
- 19-21 J Prime Minister Begin and President Carter confer in Washington and reach agreement on the need for Israel to negotiate with the Arab states in the framework of a Geneva conference in the fall of 1977.
- 22 July After meeting with UN Secretary General Waldheim, Begin says Israel will agree to the stationing of UN forces in Southern Lebanon after expulsion of PLO forces.
- 25 July Returning from the U.S., Premier Begin says there is no Israel-U.S. confrontation.
- 26 July Ministerial Committee on Settlements recognizes Kaddum, Ofra and Ma’ale Adumim as full-fledged settlements eliciting a sharp American reaction to this move.
- 27 July In a statement to the Knesset, Premier Begin announces Israel’s readiness to participate in a Geneva conference on 10 October.
- 31 July Secretary of State Vance leaves on a 12-day visit to the Middle East, bearing U.S. proposals for a Geneva peace conference.
- 2 August Sadat and Vance agree on a conference of Foreign Ministers from the Middle East prior to a full scale Geneva conference.
- ‘ Carter administration delays temporarily the submission to Congress of a request to sell F-15 fighter-bombers to Saudi Arabia.
- 4 August Assad demands an advance formulation of substantive issues for discussion at a reconvened Geneva conference, in talks with Vance he rejects idea of a working group of Foreign Ministers.

8 August	Carter says that if PLO accepts Resolution 242 in its entirety, the U.S. would then start discussions with this organization.
9 August	Israel rejects any idea of PLO participation in the peace negotiations even if it accepts Resolution 242.
10 August	Secretary Vance holds talks in Jerusalem on the proposed Foreign Ministers conference in September.
14 August	Israel government announces a policy of equalization of services for residents of the West Bank and the Gaza strip regarding health, welfare and social security.
17 August	Ministerial Committee on Settlements affirms previous approval of three new settlements in the West Bank.
18 August	The U.S. criticizes Israel's decision to equalize services in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the approval of three new settlements.
23 August	President Carter again criticizes Israel on the settlement issue but says the U.S. will not exert any military or other pressure to stop the settlements.
25-30 August	Prime Minister Begin pays an official visit to Rumania, holds important talks with President Nicolae Ceausescu and Premier Manescu. Possibility of a Begin-Sadat meeting is raised.
3-5 September	Arab Foreign Ministers hold summit conference in Cairo, discuss future political moves.
15 September	Foreign Minister Dayan visits Brussels.
17 September	Foreign Minister Dayan makes unscheduled return to Israel to consult with Premier Begin, later continues to the U.S.
23 September	In a meeting with Foreign Minister Dayan, President Carter calls for a single unified Arab delegation at the opening of the Geneva conference, that would contain Palestinians who are not known leaders of the PLO.
26 September	In a meeting with Secretary Vance, Dayan rejects participation of any PLO member in the Arab delegation.
1 October	U.S. and the Soviet Union issue a joint communique on the Middle East, which is welcomed by Arabs and criticized by Israel.
5 October	Carter and Dayan agree on a "working paper" detailing procedures for a Geneva conference. Syria rejects the paper.
10 October	Government approves settlements by six Gush Emunim groups in Samaria.
11 October	Government approves the Israel-U.S. working paper.
18 October	Brzezinski says U.S. has the right to exert leverage on Middle East parties to encourage them to move toward settlement.
19 October	U.S. sends to Cairo an amended version of the Israel-U.S. working paper on Geneva conference. Atherton says Israeli settlements in the territories are an obstacle to peace.
28 October	Israel government launches new economic program, floats the pound and makes it freely convertible, controls on foreign currency abolished.
4 November	Brzezinski proposes Palestinians abandon claim to West Bank state and Israel abandons claim of West Bank sovereignty; West Bank to become an autonomous demilitarized area politically attached to Jordan with Israeli military presence.
6-8 November	Katyusha attacks on Nahariya kill Israeli civilians.
9 November	Israeli jets attack PLO bases near Tyre. President Sadat announces his

readiness to come to Jerusalem to address the Knesset.

- 11 November Begin broadcasts to the Egyptian people and invites Sadat to Jerusalem for peace talks.
- 15 November Begin sends written invitation to Sadat to come to Jerusalem. Sadat says his trip is a holy mission.
- 16 November Sadat confers with Assad prior to trip to Jerusalem.
- 19 November Sadat arrives in Israel and receives a state welcoming ceremony at Ben-Gurion airport. Meets with Begin in Jerusalem.
- 20 November After praying at al Aksa mosque and a visit to Yad Vashem, Sadat addresses the Knesset calling for Israeli withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian state. Sadat and Begin meet again.
- 21 November Sadat meets with Knesset factions and in a press conference with Begin calls on Israel to make drastic decisions to reciprocate his visit. Begin-Sadat agreed communique says "no more wars". Sadat leaves for Cairo.
- 26 November Sadat calls for the convening of a Cairo preparatory conference to pave the way for Geneva. Israel accepts the invitation.
- 27-29 November Foreign Minister Dayan visits West Germany.
- 30 November Arab states opposed to Sadat's initiative call for talks in Tripoli.
- 2-4 December Premier Begin pays an official visit to Britain.
- 5 December Egypt severs diplomatic relations with Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria and South Yemen in retaliation for their decision to suspend relations with Egypt in protest against Sadat's initiative. The "rejectionist" Arab states conclude a 5 day summit meeting in Tripoli.
- 11 December Secretary Vance holds talks with Israeli leaders in Jerusalem in the course of a Middle East visit on the eve of the Cairo conference.
- 12 December Jordan announces it will not attend Cairo conference.
- 14 December Cairo conference opens. Premier Begin arrives in U.S. for talks with President Carter on the Israel peace plan.
- 16-17 December Begin and Carter confer in Washington. Sadat invites Begin for talks with him in Egypt.
- 20 December Begin meets with British Prime Minister in London and with representative of President Giscard to discuss the Israel peace plan. Defence Minister Weizman meets with War Minister Gamasy in Egypt.
- 21 December Weizman meets with President Sadat.
- 25 December Begin and Sadat confer in Ismailiya, agree to constitute Israel-Egypt political and military committees.
- 26 December Ismailiya summit concluded with a joint Begin-Sadat press conference. Disagreement over the Palestinian issue prevented a joint communique.
- 28 December After hearing a statement from Premier Begin, the Knesset adopts Israel peace plan by 64 votes in favor, 8 against with 40 abstentions.
- 28 December Carter praises Begin peace plan, but prefers a Palestinian homeland or entity linked to Jordan.
- 29 December Begin welcomes Carter's statement; Sadat says he is disappointed by it.
- 31 December Egypt calls on Israel to liquidate the settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza area as prerequisite for a Palestinian self determination there.

## 1978

- 1 January Karnei Shomron settled by Gush Emunim.
- 3 January Carter confers with leaders in Saudi Arabia in Riyadh.
- 4 January Carter and Sadat meet in Aswan, issue the "Aswan proclamation" calling for the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their participation in the determination of their future.
- 8 January Amidst rumors of new settlements in Northern Sinai, the Cabinet announced that no new settlements will be established in Sinai, but existing ones will be strengthened.
- 9-11 January Dayan pays an official visit to Italy.
- 11 January Israel-Egypt military committee starts talks in Cairo. Weizman meets Sadat in Aswan. Egypt demands total Israeli withdrawal from Sinai.
- 12 January Sadat proposes an Israel-Egypt-Jordan-Palestinian committee to discuss security arrangements for the West Bank. Military talks end in Cairo with some progress noted. Dayan meets with Pope Paul VI in Vatican.
- 15 January Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamel arrives in Jerusalem for political committee talks. Stresses no change in the Egyptian demand for full withdrawal and a Palestinian state.
- 16 January Secretary Vance arrives for political committee talks.
- 17 January Political committee opens its talks in Jerusalem. In a dinner speech Begin says "peace cannot be reached by restoring the 1967 borders".
- 18 January Sadat recalls Egyptian delegation from political committee talks in Jerusalem. Israel expresses regret over the unexpected move.
- 19 January Egyptian press and President Sadat launch attack on Premier Begin personally and on Israeli policy demanding total Israeli withdrawal and a Palestinian state.
- 22 January Israel government postpones despatch of Israeli military delegation for talks in Cairo in view of Egyptian demands and vilification campaign. Small Israeli military mission remains in Cairo.
- 23 January Begin tells Knesset that Israel will resume the negotiations if Egypt refrains from attacks on him and on Israel.
- 26 January U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Atherton arrives in Israel to start shuttle diplomacy for the attainment of an Israel-Egypt declaration of principles prior to resumption of peace talks.
- 31 January Military committee talks resume in Cairo, end after two days.
- 2 February Carter administration will propose to Congress a package deal for the sale of jet planes to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.
- 3 February Carter and Sadat hold talks in Camp David on ways to revive the peace talks.
- 5 February Egyptian semi-official magazine *October* calls Mr. Begin Shylock and claims Israel has A-bombs.
- 8 February Begin, in Geneva, says sale of U.S. planes to Arab states will impede peace process. Dayan, in New York to offset the Sadat visit, says Israel never gave the U.S. any commitments on settlements in the territories.
- 9 February President Carter announces he will meet with Premier Begin in March following his meeting with Dayan.

11 February	Vance calls on Israel to cease settlement activity and to dismantle settlements in the Rafiah salient. Sadat meets Labour Party Chairman Peres in Salzburg.
15 February	U.S. threatens to withdraw Israel request for jet planes if Congress blocks sale to Saudi Arabia and Egypt.
19-20 February	Israel government discusses the issue of settlements.
20 February	Atherton returns to Israel to resume shuttle diplomacy.
22 February	Dayan says that if Arabs will propose partition of West Bank, Israel would be willing to discuss it.
26 February	Cabinet says no new decisions will be taken on political matters and on settlements. British Foreign Secretary Owen arrives in Israel for talks.
5 March	Begin says Resolution 242 does not call on Israel to withdraw from West Bank, says he will not want to waste Carter's time on this issue.
6 March	Atherton's shuttle diplomacy ends in a deadlock.
9 March	Defence Minister Weizman holds talks in Washington.
11 March	Arab terrorists hijack buses on the Haifa-Tel Aviv road leaving 37 civilians dead and scores injured. Begin postpones his U.S. visit and Weizman returns home.
13 March	PLO forces flee Southern Lebanon, Beirut calls on UN to ward off an Israeli attack, U.S. declines to cite PLO as responsible for bus attack advises Israel against retaliation.
14 March	Israel Defence Force crosses the Lebanese border, seizes a strip of 7 miles along the border. Begin says IDF will remain in Lebanon until an agreement reached ensuring the area no longer serve as terrorist base.
19 March	IDF takes over entire Southern Lebanon to the Litani River as U.S. seeks Security Council Resolution that will despatch an international force to replace the IDF. Security Council adopts Resolution 425 calling for immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon and the stationing of a UN force there.
21-22 March	Begin and Carter hold two days of talks in White House. U.S. and Israel are in disagreement over a number of issues. UN forces arrive in Southern Lebanon.
24 March	Carter details the areas of Israel-U.S. disagreement, calls on Israel to make concessions. Begin returns to Israel.
30 March	Defence Minister Weizman holds talks in Cairo with Sadat and Gamasy.
3-5 April	Dayan visits Rumania and holds talks with President Ceausescu. Israel forces begin to thin out their ranks in Lebanon.
11 April	IDF starts withdrawal from Lebanon.
16 April	Cabinet adopts a positive version of Israel's interpretation of Resolution 242.
17 April	Secretary General Waldheim has talks in Jerusalem. Belgian Foreign Minister Simonet arrives for talks in Israel.
18 April	Dayan is invited to Washington for talks with Vance on how to break the three month-old deadlock in peace talks between Israel and Egypt.
19 April	Yizhak Navon is elected as Israel's fifth President.
24 April	Carter invites Begin to White House reception on 1 May to celebrate Israel's 30th anniversary. Carter and Vance say they will not compromise on package deal of sale of jet fighters to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.
26-27 April	Dayan confers with Vance, suggests that new approach on talks with Egypt

	be adopted, gets two questions from the U.S. on future status of the West Bank and Gaza and the role of Palestinians in the determination of their future.
1 May	Begin and Carter meet at White House on occasion of Israel's 30th anniversary celebrations. Begin then leaves on a 9 day tour of Jewish communities in the U.S.
11 May	Israel celebrates its Thirtieth Independence Day. Sadat proposes that Israel return Gaza to Egypt and the West Bank to Jordan and then security for Israel would be discussed.
8-16 May	Dayan visits Britain and the Scandinavian countries.
16 May	Senate approves the sale of warplanes to Israel. Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Israel expresses its regret, Arab leaders are pleased.
22 May	Israel announces it will complete its withdrawal from Lebanon by 13 June. Cabinet fears the sale of U.S. jets to Saudi Arabia and Egypt could upset regional balance of power.
29 May	In his inaugural address, President Navon calls upon Sadat to renew the peace talks.
13 June	IDF completes withdrawal from Lebanon.
18 June	Cabinet decides, in reply to U.S. questions, that future relationship with West Bank and Gaza will be discussed after five years of autonomy. Weizman opposes majority position.
22 June	U.S. expresses its regret over the position of Israel.
30 June-3 July	U.S. Vice President Mondale visits Israel.
9 July	Labour Party Chairman Peres meets with President Sadat in Salzburg.
9 July	Egypt transmits to Israel its Six Point Peace Plan based on the return of Gaza to Egypt and the West Bank to Jordan. Israel rejects the plan.
13 July	Defence Minister Weizman meets with President Sadat in Salzburg. Sadat requests unilateral Israeli gestures (early withdrawal from El-Arish and St. Catharine).
17-20 July	The Leeds Castle Conference between Dayan, Kamel and Vance. Israel agrees to discuss, following a five year transition period, the question of the sovereignty in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza region.
27 July	The Israeli military mission is withdrawn from Egypt at the latter's request. Sadat announces he will halt negotiations unless Israel makes a basic change in its position and demands active U.S. participation in the talks.
5-7 August	Secretary Vance visits Israel and Egypt, and following his talks Sadat and Begin agree to take part in the Camp David summit starting 5 September.
17 August	President Carter announces that the U.S. will be a full and equal partner in the Camp David talks.
27 August	The Israel Government decides to authorize the Israel delegation to Camp David to present an autonomy plan as the basis for a settlement in the West Bank and Gaza
3 September	Prime Minister Begin leading the Israeli delegation leaves for Camp David.
6-17 September	The Camp David conference ends in the signing, at the White House, of two agreements: the first dealing with an Israel-Egypt peace treaty and the restoration of Sinai to the latter; the second — a framework agreement establishing a format for negotiations on a 5 year autonomy regime in the West

Bank and the Gaza region. Israel-Egypt peace talks to begin shortly with an aim of signing the treaty no later than 17 December.

- 25 September The Israel Government approves the Camp David agreements by an 11-2 vote. Commerce and Industry Minister Hurwitz resigns.
- 27 September The Knesset approves the Camp David agreement by a vote of 84 for, 19 against, 17 abstentions.
- 12 October Opening of the talks at Blair House on the Israel-Egypt peace treaty. Talks run into difficulties over the linkage between the treaty and developments in the West Bank and Gaza; oil supply for Israel, a target date for the establishment of the autonomy and Egypt's demands for early Israeli withdrawal.
- 22 October Foreign and Defence Ministers Dayan and Weizman report to the Israel Government on the talks and present a draft peace treaty.
- 25 October The Government approves the draft agreement (15 Ministers in favour, 2 abstain). The talks resume in Washington. The Government also approved the "thickening" of existing Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria.
- 27 October President Sadat and Premier Begin win the Nobel Peace prize.
- 10 November The draft Treaty of Peace between Israel and Egypt is made public.
- 21 November The Israel Government adopts the text of the Peace Treaty, but Egypt introduces new demands regarding the stages of withdrawal from Sinai and the oil rights Israel is to have on wells it discovered and developed in Sinai.
- 8 December Former Prime Minister Golda Meir dies in Jerusalem.
- 10 December The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Begin and to Sayed Marei (representing Sadat) in Oslo.
- 12 December Secretary Vance arrives in Israel for another shuttle mission. The issues still in dispute are amending the text of Articles 4(4), 6(2), 6(5) of the draft treaty; the target date, exchange of ambassadors, Egyptian demands for unilateral Israeli gestures. Israel blames the U.S. for siding with Egypt. The U.S. blames Israel for lack of progress in the talks.
- 23 December The Brussels meeting between Premier Khalil, Foreign Minister Dayan and Secretary Vance yields no progress.
- 28 December The Prime Minister of Swaziland arrives for a five day visit.
- 31 December The Israel Government adopts a resolution expressing readiness to continue with the talks on the issues still separating Israel from Egypt.

## 1979

- 24 January Roving Ambassador Atherton visits the Middle East in an effort to try and find a common denominator for the differing Israeli and Egyptian interpretations of the outstanding issues.
- 22-25 February Premier Khalil and Foreign Minister Dayan meet in Camp David. Dayan is presented by the U.S. with a draft of a letter to be addresses to President Carter signed by Sadat and Begin. Israel refuses to sign such a letter arguing it distorts the Camp David agreement. Camp David II ends with no agreement.
- 25 February To break the dead-lock, President Carter invites Prime Ministers Begin and Khalil to meet with him in Washington.
- 27 February Israel rejects the Carter invitation and decides not to participate in the proposed meeting with Premier Khalil. Begin expresses readiness to meet with President Carter alone.

28 February	President Carter invites Begin for talks in Washington.
1-4 March	Begin-Carter talks in the White House. After initial serious disagreement, a last minute solution is reached on some remaining issues.
7 March	President Carter announces he will visit Israel and Egypt in a last minute effort to tie up the treaty.
10-13 March	President Carter visits Israel and wins additional concessions from Israel.
14 March	President Sadat accepts the last minute changes brought from Jerusalem by President Carter, thus paving the way for the signing of the peace treaty.
19 March	The Israel Government approves the text of the peace treaty.
22 March	The Knesset approves the Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty, by a vote of 95 for, 18 against, 2 abstentions, 3 absent.
26 March	The Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty is signed at the White House.
2-3 April	Prime Minister Begin pays an official visit to Cairo, meets with President Sadat.



**1. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin upon the presentation of his government, 20 June 1977.**

*The main theme of Mr. Begin's address to the Knesset was the historic, eternal and inalienable right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. At the same time he renewed the call, issued by all previous five Israeli Prime Ministers to the Arab leaders to negotiate with Israel and to do all to prevent war. He also reiterated Israel's desire to renew the friendship with France and the Soviet Union, while praising the importance of the American friendship for Israel. After a long debate, the government won a vote of confidence, 63 voting in favour (Likud, N.R.P. and Agudat Israel), and 53 against. Following is the part of the address dealing with foreign policy and immigration.*

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Knesset,

In a democratic decision of which we are proud, the people of Israel on 17 May 1977 resolved upon a change of guard in the administration. A party that had for a long time been the former of leaderships and governments, became the second party in the Knesset, while a political bloc that had served the nation patiently and loyally according to the rules of democracy — in parliamentary opposition — became the first party and was called upon to form a new Government.

On Tuesday, 7 June 1977, the President — by virtue of his powers, and upon the recommendation of Knesset factions representing a decisive majority of Members of the House — entrusted me with forming the Government. I have come today to present the Government — its composition and distribution of functions therein — to the Knesset and to request therefore the confidence of the House of Representatives.

The electorate has placed its trust in us — but we shall not pride ourselves in victory. We are aware that the principal tests lie ahead of us. And since the Government is new and likewise its policy, I request the house and the nation to grant it moral credit, at least for the first year of its tenure. Not in one day will we rectify the situation and advance the state in the social, economic and political spheres. Our resolve is to do so, and we shall make a supreme effort — by hard work — to implement the positive programmes for whose execution we received the people's confidence. But that takes time. I hope that the moral credit will be given us, and that we shall be able — in conditions of national consensus — to improve the lot of our people, in all walks of life.

Members of the Knesset,

Upon assuming his high office, the President of the United States, Mr. Carter, quoted from the Prophet Micah, as follows: "It hath been told thee, o man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: only to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." These words have served in the past — and always will be — a guiding light to us. But Micah the Morashtite also had a vision of *acharit hayyamim* — a vision wonderfully resembling, with certain differences, that of Isaiah the son of Amoz. To this day, the heart of every person pursuing freedom, peace and justice is stirred when reading those immortal words: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In the light of this vision, we too shall proceed, out of the faith and knowledge that this is one of the most prodigious contributions of Jewish perception to human civilization, and

that the day will come when wars between people shall cease and lethal weapons shall be no more, and peace shall reign on earth. And this, too, shall we remember: after the transcendence of the universal vision, Micah the Morashtite asserts: "For let all the peoples walk each one in the name of its God: but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever."

By virtue of this age-long heritage, I wish to declare that the Government of Israel will not ask any nation, be it near or far, mighty or small, to recognize our right to exist. The right to exist? it would not enter the mind of any Briton or Frenchman, Belgian or Dutchman, Hungarian or Bulgarian, Russian or American, to request for his people recognition of its right to exist. Their existence per se is their right to exist. The same holds true for Israel. We were granted our right to exist by the God of our fathers, at the glimmer of the dawn of human civilization, nearly four thousand years ago. For that right, which has been sanctified in Jewish blood from generation to generation, we have paid a price unexampled in the annals of the nations. Certainly, this fact does not diminish or enfeeble our right. On the contrary. Therefore, I re-emphasize that we do not expect anyone to request, on our behalf, that our right to exist in the land of our fathers, be recognized. It is a different recognition which is required between ourselves and our neighbours: recognition of sovereignty and of the mutual need for a life of peace and understanding. It is this mutual recognition that we look forward to: For it we shall make every possible effort.

The Land of Israel, our sole country; we have clung to it throughout the generations, never did we sever the link with it. We prayed to it, longed for it, loved it with all our heart and with all our soul. Not for one day did we forget it, in our wanderings in exile, and its name was upon the lips of our saintly forefathers when they were dragged by annihilating enemies to a wanton death. We were exiled from this soil and we returned unto it, with faith and by right and with sacrifice, with glorious pioneering building and in a fight for self-liberation.

No one gave us our freedom as a present. We conquered it, with the vestige of our national strength, in a generation in which a third of our people was destroyed and no one came to their rescue.

Over seventy years ago, Ze'ev Jabotinsky wrote, of this land: "Indeed, the true core of our national uniqueness is the pure fruit of the Land of Israel. Before we came to the Land of Israel we were not a nation and we had no existence. On the soil of the Land of Israel, from the fragments of diverse tribes, was the Hebrew nation formed. On the soil of the Land of Israel did we grow up. Upon it we became citizens, we fortified the faith of the one God, we inhaled the breath of the land, and in our struggle for independence and rule we were enveloped by its atmosphere, the grain that flourished on its soil sustained us. It was in the Land of Israel that the concepts of our prophets developed, and in the Land of Israel the Song of Songs was first uttered. All that is Hebrew within us has been bestowed upon us by the Land of Israel. Everything else that is within us is not Hebrew. The people of Israel and the Land of Israel are one."

And so it is, as we have asserted in our basic guidelines: the Jewish people has an historic eternal and inalienable right to the Land of Israel, the land of our forefathers.

Members of the Knesset,

We shall endeavour to deepen the friendship between ourselves and the United States of America. This will be the firm foundation of the Government's policy. America and Israel have in common not only profound feelings for and faith in the values of morality and democracy. We believe they are united also by a true and profound partnership of in-

terests. Israel is an integral part of the free world. But the free — the democratic — world has of late greatly shrunk. It may be linked to an island whose shores are swept by stormy waves and tempestuous seas of turbid totalitarianism. A famous 19th century slogan must be altered in our day: "Free men of all countries, unite. We must all stand together to repulse the threat and preserve the freedom of man."

We shall work for renewal of the friendship between Israel and France. There existed more than friendship: there was an alliance between our two countries. I hereby call on the President of France and its Government to resume those relations with Israel — of course, on a basis of reciprocity. France has many friends in Israel and Israel has excellent friends in France. From the two ends of the Mediterranean we shall stretch out a hand to one another and work for the revival of the friendship between the two peoples.

We are interested in normalization of relations between Israel and Soviet Union. Three periods have there been in relations between Zionism and the Land of Israel and the Soviet Union. Starting with the Bolshevik Revolution, for close on thirty years, relations were unbridgeable hostility instigated by Moscow. In the late 'Forties came the great turn. Under the influence of the War of Liberation against British rule, Moscow began to view the aspiration for the Jewish State's renaissance as one of human progress — and we all recall the speeches by Messrs. Gromyko and Tsarapkin, about the urgent need for establishing the Jewish State. And then the 'Fifties, in which there came a turn for the worse, Moscow lending a hand to our enemies and equipping them with lethal weapons — knowing well that one day these would be directed against the remnants of the Jewish people, whose destruction its rulers had seen with their own eyes on the soil of their country and elsewhere.

Upon the outbreak of the Six-Day War, the Soviet Union severed diplomatic relations with Israel. Resumption of these normal relations depends, in the nature of things, on Moscow's initiative. Should such initiative be forthcoming, we shall demand that an end be put to persecution of Judaism and of Zionism, to the incitement against them, that all Prisoners-of-Zion be released and every Jew throughout the Soviet Union so desiring be allowed to immigrate, to return to the Land of Israel — or, in the words of our brethren, the seekers of Zion in the Soviet Union, to the "Jewish people's historic homeland."

Our prime concern is prevention of a new war in the Middle East. I call upon King Hussein, President Sadat and President Assad to meet with me — whether in our capitals or on neutral soil, in public or away from the spotlights of publicity — in order to discuss the establishment of true peace between their countries and Israel. Much blood, too much, has been shed in the region — Jewish and Arab. Let us put an end to the bloodshedding that is abhorrent to us, and sit down to the negotiating table in sincerity and seriousness. Should this plea encounter refusal, we shall make a note of the Arab intransigence. It will not be new. Five Prime Ministers who preceded me — David Ben-Gurion, Moshe Sharett and Levi Eshkol of Blessed memory, and Mrs. Golda Meir and Yitzhak Rabin, to whom I wish long life — repeatedly called for holding such meetings. And there was no response — or, rather, there was a negative response — from the other side. But we shall not weary of sounding the call — not for propaganda purposes, but for the vital needs of our peoples and our countries.

And now, members of the Knesset, the appeal to ourselves, to our people. I call on all citizens of Israel who have left the country, to return home. In days past, Jew-haters were wont to say that the Jew pursues an opposite rule: "Ubi bene, ibi patria" (Wherever I feel good — there my homeland be). We shall take no account of them. We shall prove to our-

selves that with the revival of independence, the Jew pursues an opposite rule: "Ubi patria, ibi bene" (Where my homeland be, there be it good for me) — even though it be difficult for me. The Government will act to ease matters for the returning families. We shall not address these people by derogatory terms. Insults solve no problem. We shall say to them simply: the time has come to return home.

We call on the young generation, in the homeland and in the diaspora, to arise, go forth and settle. Come from east and west, north and south, to build together the Land of Israel. There is room in it for millions of returnees to Zion. We do not wish to evict, nor shall we evict any Arab resident from his land. Jews and Arabs, Druze and Circassians, can live together in this land. And they must live together in peace, mutual respect, equal rights, in freedom and with social-economic progress.

## **2. Basic guidelines of the government, 20 June 1977.**

*In his presentation of the government to the Knesset, the Prime Minister attached the basic guidelines which will be the foundation for its policy. In the foreign relations chapters, the government pledged itself to honour the international agreements signed by the previous Israeli governments, to call for direct or indirect negotiations with the Arab states. The government announced its readiness to participate in a Geneva conference on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338. The laws of Israel would not be applied to all the territory in the Land of Israel so long as negotiations are being conducted.*

1. Recognition of the unity of the destiny and the common struggle for existence of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora.

2. The Jewish People has an eternal, historic right to the Land of Israel, the inalienable inheritance of its forefathers.

3. The Government will plan, establish and encourage urban and rural settlement on the soil of the homeland.

4. The Government will make the encouragement of aliyah a chief national task.

5. The Government will place the aspiration for peace at the forefront of its concerns, and will strive actively and constantly to achieve permanent peace in the region.

6. The Government will invite Israel's neighbors, jointly and severally, either directly or through a friendly state, to conduct direct negotiations towards the signing of a peace treaty, without prior conditions on the part of anyone and without formulation of a solution drawn up from outside.

7. The Government announces its readiness to take part in the Geneva conference, at such time as it shall be invited to do so by the United States and the Soviet Union, on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

8. In preparation for the Geneva conference and direct negotiations, the Government announces Israel's readiness to conduct negotiations in order to achieve true, contractual and effective peace that will lead to normalization of life in the region.

9. In the absence of peace treaties, the parties to the dispute will be committed to the agreements signed between them by previous governments.

10. The Knesset has empowered the Government to apply by administrative order the law, judiciary and administration of the state to all territory of the Land of Israel, as

shall be determined by administrative order. This legal and parliamentary authority is left to the Government's discretion; it will not be invoked so long as negotiations are being conducted on a peace treaty between Israel and its neighbors. The matter will be determined by the choice of proper timing, the political judgment of the Government, and the approval of the Knesset after a special debate.

11. Equality of rights for all citizens and residents, without distinction of religion, race, nation, sex or ethnic group.

12. The Government will guarantee the rights and liberties of the individual, the encouragement of free initiative, and equality of opportunity and the advancement and well-being of the individual.

13. A constant campaign for the return to Zion of all who yearn for her in the Soviet Union, and for the rescue of the Jewries of Syria and the Arab states.

14. Restraint of inflation, stabilization of the currency, and assurance of a decent standard of living for all residents of the state.

15. Action to eradicate poverty, and the provision of aid to large families, particularly in housing and education.

16. A constant effort to increase investment from abroad and to renew economic development; a special effort will be made to encourage construction of rental housing.

17. The Government shall make it its business to ensure employment, and encourage pride of creativity and work morale.

18. The Government will provide encouragement and incentive for greater productivity and output, in a joint effort at rapid growth of the gross national product and at constantly increasing the total of exports.

19. The Government will work to improve labor relations and to lessen economic disputes, among other ways through enacting a law for compulsory arbitration in vital services.

20. The Government will work to encourage and widen agricultural settlement of all types.

21. Taking action to prevent emigration; return of citizens who have left their native land and increase of aliyah from both East and West.

22. Respect for law and eradication of crime and violence.

23. Institution of a long school-day, and the basing of education on the values of Judaism and Zionism, on love of the Jewish people and the homeland.

24. The Government will ensure freedom of conscience and religion for all citizens, the provision of religious needs through the state, and the provision of religious education for the children of all citizens who so desire.

25. The status quo in religious matters will be maintained.

26. The Government will honor the international agreements signed by previous governments.

### **3. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on A.B.C. Television, 21 June 1977.**

*In his congratulatory message to Prime Minister Begin, President Carter invited him for talks in Washington. The date agreed upon was 18 July. One of the major subjects to be*

*discussed would be the future of the West Bank. In this interview, Foreign Minister Dayan said that he could not see any Israeli government or party giving up the West Bank.*

**Q.** Do you see, as any part of the solution, Israel giving up the West Bank or do you see it remaining part of Israel?

**A.** Well, it's not exactly one of the two, just only one of these two alternatives. All the Israelis, government and parties agree that Israel should have the right to have Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and none of them think of complete pullout from the West Bank. I cannot see giving up the West Bank to Jordan accepted by any Israeli party or government.

**Q.** What do you think when you hear President Carter talk about the Palestinians—the Palestinians must have a homeland?

**A.** Well, everyone must have a homeland. How, the question is what exactly the President meant by that. But if you want to interpret it into a state, and you don't mean just that they feel that this is their home, but this is their state, then I don't really think that the West Bank can become a Palestinian state, and I don't know any Arab leader who thinks that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip can really make a state.

**Q.** What is your view on President Carter's statement about perhaps two sets of borders for Israel, one the actual border on the map and the other perhaps a buffer zone or a neutral zone?

**A.** Well, I don't really know exactly what he means by that, and I think that should be clarified when Mr. Begin will go to Washington next month.

#### **4. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on A.B.C. Television, 22 June 1977.**

*In another interview, dealing with the West Bank, Mr. Dayan said that like any other part of the territories held by Israel, the West Bank is open for negotiations and called upon the Arab states to put forward their proposals. Other subjects included in the interview were Israel-America relationship, the role of the United States as a mediator and the prospects of a forthcoming Geneva conference.*

**Q.** Is there any possibility of your negotiating on the West Bank question? Is there any possibility of a state on the West Bank, whether it be under Jordan or under Israel?

**A.** Absolutely, there is. The West Bank is open for negotiations, just like any other part of the territory, absolutely. The only difference is that in the past the Israelis put forward their own ideas and partition, like the Allon Plan. Now we say, once this was rejected, and totally rejected for ten years, and whatever we suggested, we — Israel — the Arabs did not accept, let them put forward their suggestions and see if we can come to an agreement. But the West Bank is absolutely open for negotiations.

**Q.** But when you say that, would you say the West Bank was open to negotiations to the degree that Vice President Mondale and President Carter have talked about, which would be the return of almost all the territories occupied in 1967?

**A.** Yes. Well, it's open to negotiation even for a complete return, not only almost. I wouldn't accept it, just like some of our suggestions will probably be rejected by the Arabs.

So each party, when they put a proposal, should take mind that they need the agreement of the other party. I should say that such a proposal, like the one of Mr. Mondale, I for one, wouldn't have accepted it.

**Q.** Then aren't we talking then about a growing rift between Israel and the U.S. Government, when the U.S. has always been Israel's strongest, and in some cases, its only defender?

**A.** Well, I think that that's why Mr. Begin will be going to Washington and we shall explain our case. I understand, and I still think, that the U.S. wants to mediate between the parties and the U.S. idea is to get a peace agreement but not necessarily any fixed plan.

**Q.** Mr. Begin, the new Prime Minister, has asked the three Arab leaders — Assad, Sadat, Hussein to meet to discuss a real peace in the Mideast, as all Prime Ministers before Mr. Begin. The Arabs have refused to meet under these circumstances in the past. If they do not meet now with you, how will you then try to find a peace, if they won't meet with you?

**A.** Well, Mr. Begin did say that in case they don't want to talk to us directly, then we shall do it through a mediator, and that is the Geneva Peace Conference. He said that we are ready to go to Geneva and that the present government, headed by Mr. Begin will honor the previous agreement, which is going to Geneva and then negotiating with the Arabs through a mediator, that is your people, the administration of the U.S. of America.

**Q.** With the PLO represented at Geneva?

**A.** No. It was not there before, and the PLO is not entitled to be there.

**Q.** But, the Government of Israel is now, for the first time, headed by a man who in the days before Israel's independence was head of an organization that used terrorist tactics. Does that not change Israel's stance vis a vis the PLO, which also used terrorist tactics?

**A.** No. We are talking about a Geneva Peace Conference, and I don't want to discuss Mr. Begin, my Prime Minister this way. I don't think there's any comparison between him and the PLO. The Geneva Peace Conference states very clearly within Resolution 338 what the subject would be and which parties should take part there, and the PLO was not there in 1973. Everybody knew about the PLO, and no one wanted them to take part in the Geneva Conference, so why should Mr. Begin now change that? I wouldn't support it, anyway.

**Q.** The Arabs have said — many of them — that if there is not a peace this year, that they expect another war. King Hussein said he expected, and I am quoting, disaster, unquote, if there is not a peace settlement this year. Are we talking about a choice between peace and war in this year?

**A.** We are talking about a choice between negotiations and a standstill, which is very bad, and I am all for resumption of negotiations, and all of us are for that. I believe that President Carter is for that. He was just waiting for the elections in Israel. He already saw the leaders of the Arab countries and Mr. Rabin, and now he will see Mr. Begin in order to push forward the negotiations. So I think that the choice is between negotiations and standstill which is bad and might lead to a war, and not between peace and an unintelligible war. Negotiation is an intelligible step, and I believe that as long as we negotiate, there will not be another war.

**Q.** Your majority of your government is so slim, do you really have a lot of room to negotiate? Do you have strong enough support within your own government to really force a strong negotiating position?

A. Oh yes. That's not a problem. The problem of a narrow majority is in a different field altogether. In order to negotiate we would have the support of the entire house, no problem with that. All of the other parties, the Labor and the Democratic one, would support negotiation, and there is no one within the government that would object to negotiation. Let me put it like that: You know that I do not belong to Mr. Begin's party, and when he asked me to come over to try to serve as Minister for Foreign Affairs, it was just for that, to try to find a man, by his point of view, the best one in the country for negotiation.

##### **5. Statement by President Carter upon the signing of anti-boycott legislation, 22 June 1977.**

*For a number of years, Israel has been engaged in a major campaign to fight the Arab economic boycott, which has been in practice since its establishment. An important achievement was made when President Carter signed an amendment to the Export Administration Act which will prohibit Americans from refusing to do business with blacklisted firms and boycotted friendly countries and from discriminating on the basis of race, sex or national origin. In his statement, the President hoped that "this legislation will help lessen tension in the Middle East and lead to permanent peace in that region."*

For many months I have spoken strongly on the need for legislation to outlaw secondary and tertiary boycotts and discrimination against American businessmen on religious or national grounds.

During the campaign I called this a profound moral issue from which we should not shrink.

My concern about foreign boycotts stemmed, of course, from our special relationship with Israel, as well as from the economic, military and security needs of both our countries. But the issue also goes to the very heart of free trade among all nations.

I am, therefore, particularly pleased today to sign into law the 1977 amendments to the Export Administration Act, which will keep foreign boycott practices from intruding directly into American commerce.

The new law does not threaten or question the sovereign right of any nation to regulate its own commerce with other countries, nor is it directed toward any particular country. The bill seeks instead to end the divisive effects on American life of foreign boycott aimed at Jewish members of our society.

If we allow such a precedent to become established, we open the door to similar action against any ethnic, religious, or racial group in America.

This legislation owes much to the hard work of Senators Stevenson and Proxmire, Congressmen Zablocki, Rosenthal, Hamilton, Bingham, Solarz, Whalen, the (Foreign) Relations Committee, and to many others.

It owes just as much to the patient perservance of the Business Round Table, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, and the American Jewish Congress, as well as other groups.

The openness of their discussion and the delicate legislative process which shaped this bill has reconfirmed my own belief in the value of open government.



This cooperative effort between the business community, the Jewish leaders, the Congress and the Executive Branch can serve as a model for what can be accomplished in even more difficult areas, when reasonable people agree to sit down together in good will and good faith.

I am confident that the divisive issues in the Middle East, which give rise to current boycotts, can be resolved equally satisfactorily through a similar process of reasonable, peaceful, cooperation.

My administration will now effectively enforce this important legislation.

I want to congratulate again all the distinguished Americans in the Congress and otherwise who are gathered around me for this ceremony and to express my confidence that the enforcement of this legislation will help to lessen the tensions in the Middle East and hopefully lead to a permanent peace in that troubled region.

#### **6. Statement by Prime Minister Begin to the Zionist General Council, 23 June 1977.**

*In his first major public address after becoming Prime Minister, Mr. Begin outlined his beliefs and explained the foundations of his policy. He came out strongly against withdrawal to the 1967 borders and the establishment of a Palestinian state, both eventualities would endanger the very existence of Israel. He also said there was no contradiction between Israel's insistence on the right to the Land of Israel and various international documents, including resolution 242. Israel would leave every issue open for negotiation and would not make any prior conditions. She expects the same from the Arab states. Following are excerpts from the foreign policy parts of the address:*

I should now like to explain to the Zionist General Council something about which we are all agreed, all the parties that are loyal to the State, that is to say I I, all except the one which is totally enslaved to a foreign capital. This national consensus is of overriding importance, in the coming discussions, both for us and for the capitals of the world, particularly perhaps the one I shall be visiting in a few weeks time by invitation of the President of the U.S.A. You should know that his message was cordial and encouraging. And meanwhile we can be happy with the change that has taken place in recent weeks in public opinion, that is to say in the press that influences public opinion. We are pleased about this change.

Furthermore, the Zionist General Council should know that not only greetings from Jewish organisations but messages of support and identification for the Government of Israel have arrived from all over the world. United States Jewry, I heard today from the Chairman of the Presidents' Conference, stands totally united, ready to fight for our rights, our due. I received the most cordial telegram from the well-known institution of British Jewry, the Board of Deputies, and from the Zionist Federation of Great Britain.

All these messages give encouragement and add resolve to work for the betterment of the Jewish People. We are indeed blessed that we have so merited. Our people is closing ranks and uniting.

This is a need to do much and I hope that we will work together with a unity of purpose. That is why I want to explain here — after I heard yesterday that there had been

some differences of opinion here at the Zionist General Council — and this is entirely natural, there are also differences of opinion in the Knesset — about what there is general agreement amongst all the parties excepting that one.

First, Israel can not under any circumstances withdraw to the lines of June 4, 1967, and will not do so. Second, we will not agree under any circumstances that in Judea and Samaria and Gaza a state should come into being called Palestinian. These two proposals that are being voiced round the world entail danger for the very existence of the State of the Jews. Every man and woman in Israel must realise this. That is to say: to remove these proposals from the international agenda, we shall, in the truest sense of the term, fight for our lives. And when the People of Israel, during its history, has been called upon to defend its very existence it fights with courage and overcomes. We have — and I say this in earnest belief — we have, with the help of the Almighty, a chance for success in this struggle. It is a good realistic chance, and we have to succeed with it for the danger is very great.

What would happen to us if — heaven forbid — what our enemies demand and what is mentioned from time to time in various countries were to take place? If the State of Israel, in the conditions of modern military technology, to which there was nothing similar in 1948, nor in 1956 nor even in 1967, were to be on the road to Qalqiliya, 14 kilometres, 8 miles — it is superfluous to add only — only 8 miles from the coast. And on the road to Tel Aviv, 15 kilometres from the coast, 8.5 miles. And on the road to Ashkelon, 25 kilometres from the coast. We should lose the opportunity for peace, certainly in this generation, and perhaps also for future generations. We must also take note of the fact that even in return for such a withdrawal our enemies are not promising peace, but what is called an end to the state of belligerency. They stress that they will not recognise Israel, nor will they sign a peace treaty with her. Only what they refer to as an end to the state of belligerency, an expression that has no standing in international law.

It happened once that a dictatorial ruler decided that his country was non-belligerent. Mussolini did this at the outbreak of the Second World War. And it didn't disturb him one iota, after France had been over-run by the German tanks, that he immediately joined in the war and trampled the fallen underfoot.

This then is the value of a non-belligerency declaration. It is not peace. It is certainly not a peace treaty. It is not a recognition of sovereignty. It is just a declaration that under certain circumstances is worth no more than the paper on which it is written. This is something that we must all understand. And if this is what our enemies are saying as a starter, then we lose the very chance for peace. Let us take a look at the map. As I have said: 14, 15, 25 kilometres from their guns, which today have a range of 43 kilometres and 800 metres, for this is the modern Soviet artillery which did not exist in the years that I have mentioned, in 1948, in 1967.

In other words, with these guns they can reach every large city in Israel (Hebrew idiom, literally — “city and mother in Israel”) — with the intended double implication — every home in the country. Previously Haifa had been outside their range, but there has recently been a serious development with the entry of the Syrian army into Lebanon. And from Lebanon, with these guns, Haifa Bay can be shelled directly, including the oil refineries, a strategic target of the utmost importance, and parts of Haifa town.

The danger is indeed very real — we can see it in the palm of our hand. We recall the surprise of the Yom Kippur War. Sadat does not deny that he surprised us primarily to inflict loss of life. They know, and we not only do not deny it, but readily confirm that there is no people on earth that is so sensitive to loss of life. This is no wonder. Our people lost a

third of its sons in a single generation, amongst whom were a million small children who were torn from their mothers' arms. In this land, we have sacrificed fifteen thousand of the best of our sons in wars that were forced upon us. How much blood can a people such as this give?

So we say explicitly that here we all know each other; the fallen are in front of our eyes. There is a difference if someone living in New York reads in the newspaper about a loss of life suffered in Los Angeles, it pains him, without doubt. But he doesn't know them; he reads about them. Here we know nearly all our children; we are a small nation; one person knows another. And those who fell are always in our mind's eye. This is the incomparable difference.

And the enemy knows it. Knows, and desires in the first instance to inflict loss of life on us. Give a moment's consideration to the situation: With one massive barrage, on all the towns in the country, from Tel Aviv and Jaffa, Netanya and Bnei Braq, Rehovot and Rishon Lezion, Afula and Beersheba, in the first hours he could inflict on us casualties in the thousands.

Yes, even then we would win through, and our army would take the initiative and repel the enemy, capturing or destroying the guns. We need to remember how many sacrifices would have to be made for this victory, amongst the civilian population and amongst our soldiers. And what for? To create a situation such as we have at present, whereby these guns can not reach every home in Tel Aviv or Rishon Lezion. It would be as though — and I say this in all earnestness, for it is something that, heaven forbid, could happen — it would be as though we were spilling blood for nothing. It will not be an excursion. Any war of this sort costs in human terms. This, therefore, is the sort of danger ahead.

And with regard to the Palestinian State, we have to realise that we are faced with the most cruel enemy of the Jewish people since the days of the Nazis. They have made up their minds to try, and can now but try to destroy us, man, woman and child. We don't really need the Palestinian Charter to know this. It is written there, in Paragraph 19, that the establishment of the State of Israel is null and void as though it had never been. They met together in Cairo, and there was hope in certain countries for a toning down of their position and hope was expressed that this paragraph would be retracted. But they didn't even consider it. It didn't cross their minds. They confirmed it explicitly — for this is the line of their thought.

Consider, Ladies and Gentlemen, the difference between fighters and murderers. We know the meaning of a war of liberation. I am in possession of the facts, and I can say, in the name of all three organisations, the Haganah, Etsel and Lehi, that in our fight from the underground against a very strong government, we made every effort humanely possible to prevent loss of life amongst the civilian population, without distinction between Jewish, Arab or British. And there were times when we even endangered the lives of our own men in order to prevent such casualties.

True, every war is harsh. Sometimes even in war things happen that are far from what was intended, but what does the fighter do in such circumstances? He expresses his deep regret for what happened, also for the educational point, that the soldiers should do the fighting. This was not what we intended. A tragic incident has happened, and we express our sorrow over what happened before the whole world. And this is what Israel's fighters have always done. But they — and what a difference there is — plan in the first instance the murder of children, and when they meet with "success" with their scheme they are overcome with joy, promising to do the same thing again. This is the difference.

We fought to save a people. They are shooting to destroy a people. We made every possible effort to prevent casualties amongst the civilian population. For them the civilian population is the target, and when they inflict damage there is joy and happiness but not one word of regret. They tell their men: It is permissible, necessary to kill Jewish children.

And it is they who, inevitably, would be in control of this state. No agreement will be made, unless it is with some other body, that would transfer Judea and Samaria and Gaza to these murderers. This is the reality, and we have to consider only the reality, and so there has been an incessant spilling of blood. We have proof of this from the past. But then they did not have at their disposal all the means of destruction that they have today, including a missile by means of which it is possible from a certain distance to hit any airplane. And if this were the situation we should not be able to take off, certainly not from Lod, nor, in fact, from any airfield. And that they are capable of such deeds we have seen, for they do not consider man, woman or child. We know; we have faced such a situation. A permanent blood bath.

And the additional proof is of course from the past, for this was in fact the situation prior to 1967. One tends to forget, particularly the unpleasant things. We have almost forgotten. Before 1967 there was a continuous spilling of blood. 1500 Jews from the civilian population were killed and murdered; thousands of others were wounded and left disabled for the rest of their lives. And they penetrated to Shafir near Tel Aviv, to Romema in Jerusalem, to Ashkelon and Ashdod and Beersheba and between Beersheba and Ashkelon. Ah, yes, we don't remember those times.

That was the situation when we were still in the old borders. We have to realise and take note. Our very existence is endangered, the lives of our children. I am sure that I would be expressing the opinion of the whole Zionist General Council were I to say: Our younger generation has sworn an oath of allegiance to protect every Jewish woman and every Jewish child that they should never again be hurt by a savage murderer.

There is another point that I have to explain to you — you are free people, who have come from the free countries, — that this would be a direct risk for us, and also for the whole of the free world. Yes, indeed; let us take a look at the map of the Middle East. In South Yemen, the former Aden, there is a pro-Soviet government. In Somalia, along the Red Sea, on the way to the Indian Ocean, there is a pro-communist government. Libya — although ruled by a fanatical Muslim — is a Soviet base. Modern weaponry — to the tune of billions of dollars — which the Libyan ruler does not even have the manpower to operate — this is a base for the whole of the Middle East. For all the ports that are available to the Soviet fleet that goes backwards and forwards between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Iraq and Syria are bases for a determining Soviet influence. Egypt — true there was an argument, but as you have heard Fahmi has already visited Moscow and a visit by Gromyko in Cairo is ensured, as well as of Brezhnev, and the two parties are making an effort to renew the friendship between them.

And with regard to the organisation that calls itself the P.L.O. — it is virtually a Soviet agent. Is it co-incidental that a strategic committee met in Moscow with the participation on the one hand of Cairo and on the other of Arafat at the same time? Because the Soviet Union is attempting to take the free world with a pincer movement with the help of the Cubans in Africa and those who are called Palestinians in the Middle East. This today is the map of the Middle East. It is necessary to add to all these a main Soviet base in the heart of the Middle East — that is in the Land of Israel.

The Soviets, after their invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, discovered deficien-

cies in their logistic system, which they have since then corrected and improved such that they are today capable of supplying in an air lift heavy arms to Angola and later to Mozambique, a distance of thousands of miles from the southern U.S.S.R. From Odessa to Bethlehem. A distance of a few hours flight in a modern aeroplane.

Should a Palestinian State be established there, day after day — and we should be unable to prevent it — planes would arrive with these same modern armaments. Nobody could prevent it. No agreement, signed by whoever, would be worth anything, as I have said, the paper on which it was written. Who would be able to prevent it? Who would even be able to keep tabs on it? By night, furtively, descending from the clouds. Airfields would not be necessary. What are called runways would suffice. Plane after plane. They would deliver the weaponry. In Bethlehem of Judea. Right on the doorstep of homes where Jews live.

And so a central Soviet base would come into being right in the heart of the Middle East, in addition to those that I enumerated previously. Would this be good for the free world? Would this be good for the free world and for America? And we may also ask: Would this be good for France? Would this be good for free Europe? This question has to be posed, and this truth has to be stated. And in this way, the recognition has to be inculcated of the true partnership of interests between us and the free world.

Let me state again, therefore, that on these two points we have a national consensus. After the last debate in the Knesset, I received approval of all the parties to my saying this in the name of the decisive majority, over 110 members of the Knesset, to any party with whom we might hold talks, negotiations and meetings in which our future would be discussed.

And while talking about our future, I should like today to explain that in insisting on our right to the Land of Israel, we find no contradiction between this position and international documents, including Resolution 242, as I shall show in a moment. But first, let me say something about our right to the Land of Israel. I am speaking with Zionists. In the Knesset, I quoted words written by Zeev Jabotinsky 72 years ago, at a time when he was only 25 years old, and even then he determined that everything creative in our midst derived from the Land of Israel. For the Land of Israel and the People of Israel are one.

And on those feuillets a whole generation was educated in Russia, and even nowadays the Prisoners of Zion are again reading them. I shall not repeat what I quoted in the Knesset, but I would ask that one day or evening, you again read the book, which certainly every one of us has read many times, and as one looks through it, what a warmth is felt in the heart. I am referring to Herzl's diaries. That indecision of his between the Land of Israel and any other place before he reached the decision: The Land of Israel. Zion — this is our great love, this is our dream, there it will be possible to elevate the flag, and we all recall what he wrote about the flag.

We are all Zionists. The Land of Israel is in our hearts. Even when we were in the Dispersion, we dreamt about it, longed for it and prayed for it. This is Zion. This is the Return to Zion.

It is necessary for the younger generation to love the Land of Israel with all its heart and all its soul, for this is the inheritance of our forebearers. It was given to us — for ever. We have made so many sacrifices for it, because there was no Jewish State, and our fathers died all sorts of deaths and we arrived at a situation where the men were no longer able to protect their women and their children. This is the meaning of the Land of Israel. Rightly it is called "Our land of life". It is clear that without it we can not exist at all, and with it we

have no peace even if we live here. This is the connection between us and the Land of Israel.

And now I shall prove the thesis. We have to remember what it says in Resolution 242. It was not fortuitous, when the Resolution was under discussion but an explicit thought, which was expressed in the draft “withdrawal of forces from the territories”, with the word “the”. And it was consciously decided to remove the word “the”. The fact that it was proposed to include it and that it was taken out is of the greatest significance. Those who accepted it knew the opinions and the argument; the “the” was taken out, and it is therefore written not “from the territories” but “from territories”.

With regard to the border, the territory that was conquered in 1948 — contrary to international law, by Abdulah’s Arab Legion, never was nor is recognised as a state frontier. This is explicitly stated, and I shall read to you today the famous but forgotten paragraph 2 of the Armistice Agreement, first in its original version, and then in translation.

Both sides signed it. And now the translation: Under no circumstances should the Armistice Line be interpreted as a state or territorial border, and in drawing it there is no prejudice to the rights, claims and positions of either of the parties to the Armistice Agreement concerning the final settlement of the question of the Land of Israel.

Intentionally and consciously it was determined that it is no more than a writ of demarcation, while Resolution 242 determines that the peoples must live in peace, within recognised and safe borders, and here is the main word, the key word, which is “recognised”. You will find these terms in every peace treaty. Every peace treaty starts with the announcement that the state of war has been terminated and subsequently the first paragraph is about the area and the border fixed in the peace treaty. In other words, if Resolution 242 determined that the borders have to be recognised by everyone — initially by the two parties and subsequently by the international community — this means that negotiations have to be conducted over it, obviously negotiations between the two parties. And if the demarcation line is not a border, and the whole question of the Land of Israel was left open, we have every right, not, heaven forbid, as a prior condition: First recognise our claim and then we shall come to the discussion table; there are no prior conditions for either side, each may bring any subject and place it on the table for discussion. But we have every legal — not only historical — right — not only given but acquired by these international documents — to claim Judea and Samaria. About this there is no doubt. It is a matter for negotiations, but I have demonstrated that neither this international document nor Resolution 242 form an obstacle to the Jewish People’s basic claim that the Land of Israel belongs by right to the Jewish People. Let us remember this.

As I said before, this does not close the path to any negotiations. We are not putting forward any ultimatum. I want to state, specifically in English, that the words “not negotiable” do not appear in any of our dictionaries. Everything is open for negotiation. But the negotiation has to be free, as is written in the platform of the Democratic Party of the United States of America: “Without any externally devised formula for settlement”. The parties, freely, without prior conditions and without an externally devised solution must be free to present any proposal, and negotiate it between them.

This is international law, Ladies and Gentlemen. This is international practice. In our case, we should not be the first to know that when negotiations start over a peace treaty there are differences of opinion between the parties. Were there not differences of opinion between the parties after the First World War? Were not two peace treaties signed with Turkey after the First World War? Were there not differences of opinion between the par-

ties after the Second World War? But the world attained peace — both peace treaties and actual peace.

For this indeed is the way to instill true peace between us and the Arabs — a peace for which we all hope and pray and believe will come. With the help of God, peace will come.

And now, I am honoured to remind you, Ladies and Gentlemen, members of the Zionist General Council, of what Max Nordau said. He once asked: Who is a Zionist? And responded: A fighter! I call upon you to put this saying of Max Nordau into effect in our life time, in these days. Every Zionist is a fighter! Without wavering, without any faltering, but in the firm belief of the rightness of our cause. All of us have to mobilise for a propaganda counter attack. Did anyone ever dream that the word “Palestine” would be used as a weapon against us? I have read you an international document. On one side, Palestine, in English, and its Hebrew translation: Eretz Yisrael, the Land of Israel.

When the Mandate was confirmed in San Remo, it was stated: “Recognition having been given to the historical connection between the Jewish People and Palestine” — “The Jewish People and Palestine”, because every intelligent person knew that this was the foreign name for the Land of Israel, that entered international use at the time of Hadrian, after the Bar Kokhba rebellion had been put down. And what is a foreign name but a translation? And this now is being turned against us? The historical connection between us and this country, Palestine, has been recognised by the international community. It is necessary to withstand the falsehood that has found its way into certain circles on the background of this concept. We want to live with the Arab minority in our country in mutual respect, full equality of rights and with cultural autonomy. What we once demanded for ourselves, we give, must give, in all justice and fairness, to our neighbours, human progress. What injustice are we perpetrating? For this is the rule for every free person, majority or minority, members of different peoples can live in one country in peace, with understanding and progress. What is the innovation here? For this is what Zionism believed in. At one time we were no more than 6%, 7% of this population. If people had been frightened by the overriding majority then the realisation of Zionism would have stopped. But no-one stopped it. On the contrary, if it hadn't been for the destruction, our circumstances would have been entirely different. Who of us does not know — those who were destroyed were in their hearts citizens of the Land of Israel, with all their heart. But they are no more.

## **7. Statement by State Department Spokesman on Israel's negotiating position, 27 June 1977.**

*Three weeks before the arrival in Washington of Prime Minister Begin, the Carter administration stated publicly that for Israel to exclude automatically any administered area, including the West Bank, from negotiations with the Arabs, would be contrary to “the principle of negotiations without preconditions.” The statement was a reaction to a speech by Senator Javits that Israel could not be secure by returning to the 1967 boundaries. This elicited an explanation of the Carter administration policy.*

We believe strongly that progress toward a negotiated peace in the Middle East is essential this year if future disaster is to be avoided. We also believe that the only true security for

any country in that troubled area is a true peace negotiated between the parties.

Fortunately we do not begin our efforts in a vacuum. A starting point exists in U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 of November, 1967, which all the governments involved have accepted. The United States policy since 1967 has consistently sought to apply the principles agreed in that resolution through the process of negotiations called for in Security Council Resolution 338 of October, 1973, which all the parties have also accepted.

The peace foreseen in these resolutions requires both sides to the dispute to make difficult compromises. We are not asking for one-sided concessions from anyone.

The Arab States will have to agree to implement a kind of peace which produces confidence in its durability. In our view that means security arrangements on all fronts, satisfactory to all parties, to guarantee established borders and steps toward the normalization of relations with Israel.

That peace, to be durable, must also deal with the Palestinian issue. In this connection, the President has spoken of the need for a homeland for the Palestinians, whose exact nature should be negotiated between the parties. Clearly, whatever arrangements were made would have to take into account the security requirements of all parties involved.

Within the terms of Resolution 242, in return for this kind of peace, Israel clearly should withdraw from occupied territories. We consider that this resolution means withdrawal on all three fronts in the Middle East dispute — Sinai, Golan, West Bank—Gaza — with the exact borders and security arrangements being agreed in the negotiations.

These negotiations must start without any preconditions from any side. This means no territories, including the West Bank, are automatically excluded from the items to be negotiated. This strikes us as contradictory to the principle of negotiating without preconditions, nor does it conform to the spirit of Resolution 242, which forms the framework for these negotiations.

Every administration since 1967 has supported Resolution 242, and it has the widest international support as well.

## **8. Foreign Ministry's statement on Israel's negotiating position, 28 June 1977.**

*In his statement, the spokesman for the Foreign Ministry refuted the allegations of the State Department spokesman regarding Israel's negotiating position and quoted the Prime Minister who declared, on 23 June 1977, that "everything is negotiable."*

Commenting today on the U.S. State Department Spokesman's statement on 27 June, the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that there was no foundation for the assumption implied by the Washington spokesman's statement, as though Israel had excluded any territory whatsoever from the framework of the expected discussion with the Arab states. The spokesman stressed that, in accordance with the Government's basic policy guidelines, and the Knesset's resolution — every issue was negotiable.

In this connection, the Foreign Ministry Spokesman drew attention to the Prime Minister's statement at the Zionist Executive Council's meeting in Jerusalem on 23.6.77, as follows:



*"We do not propound any ultimative demand. The words 'non-negotiable' are not found in any dictionary of ours. Everything is negotiable. The negotiation, however, must be free. As was stated in the U.S. Democratic Party's Platform: 'without any externally devised formula for settlement'."*

The Foreign Ministry Spokesman went on to note that the other issues mentioned in the U.S. State Department Spokesman's statement, such as definition of the nature of peace, were slated for the discussion between the Prime Minister of Israel and the U.S. President, that will be held in the course of Mr. Begin's visit to the U.S. — and eventually, for negotiation between Israel and its neighbours, in the framework of peace-settlement discussions.

#### **9. Press conference with State Department Spokesman and written reply, 28 June 1977.**

*Additional clarifications to the statement of 27 June, were provided by the State Department spokesman a day later. He said that the U.S. is not suggesting that there would be instant Israeli withdrawal or instant Arab recognition of Israel. These two developments would be part of the peacemaking process. He also said that there would have to be a peace treaty, but the United States cannot say what the timetable would be in the peace process. Excerpts follow:*

**Q.** In the statement which you read, which was clearly a prepared statement, you spoke of steps toward normalization of relations. You did not speak in terms of normal relations per se — which is part, I suppose, of any legalistic peace agreement between the parties.

Can you now tell us — can we try again and ask you if there is been any change in the administration's view that Israel would not give up all these substantial territories for anything less than real peace — including exchange of ambassadors, trade, the movement of people, the common factors in what is called legalistic peace, juridical peace?

**A.** Yes. Yesterday's comment had to do with the desire not to go into a long repetition on a number of points of policy, but let me say there is not any change on this at all. The point on both cases is that we don't want to suggest that there would be either instant withdrawal or instant normalization of relations, that both of these processes would require time and negotiation. However, since what I said was pretty much a reiteration of Vice President Mondale's speech, I would like to go back to that and try to use it as a definition statement on the question you raise. I am quoting him:

*"President Carter has gone further than any of his predecessors to stress with Arab leaders the essential point that peace must more than merely an end to hostilities, stating as he did in Clinton, Massachusetts, last March: "The first prerequisite of a lasting peace is the recognition of Israel by her neighbors — Israel's right to exist, Israel's right to exist permanently, Israel's right to exist in peace. That means that over a period of months or years that the borders between Israel and Syria, Israel and Lebanon, Israel and Jordan, Israel and Egypt must be opened to travel, to tourism, to cultural exchange, to trade, so that no matter who might be in those countries, the peo-*

*ple themselves will form the mutual understanding, the comprehension, and a sense of common purpose to avoid the repetitious wars and deaths that affected that region so long. That is the first prerequisite of peace”.*

*“We have found that the Arab leaders did not insist that this kind of peace is something only that future generations could consider.’ Some leaders, such as King Hussein during his visit to Washington, have made clear their commitment to a just and lasting peace, one which will enable all the people in the Middle East to devote their energies and resources to build and attain a better future”.*

This is our policy on the nature of peace in the area.

**Q.** So that, in sum, some parallel system or some symmetrical system — as Israel withdraws the Arabs take these steps. The ultimate objective is a real peace for all people?

**A.** The ultimate objective is to have real peace in the area. “True peace” I think was the phrase I used yesterday. And it is also, as we have said before, withdrawal, again without trying to say what the timetable is in either instance.

What I was trying to point out yesterday, of course, is that the reason that I was reluctant to go much further than where I was, is that basically how this proceeds and what form it reaches and how it reaches are basically matters for the parties to discuss and to decide upon and to reach themselves.

**Q.** Hodding, at what point in the process would there be a document that would be called a peace treaty?

**A.** Well, there would have to be a treaty of some sort. Now at what point I am hesitant just to say it — you know, where it comes in. It is to be there, though.

**Q.** Would it be there before the withdrawals and before the step toward normalization?

**A.** Again, I am just not prepared to go down the line and tell you where each step takes place. I am trying to tell you what we think has to be the result of the process.

**Q.** Has any Arab leader said publicly or privately that he is willing to sign a peace treaty with Israel?

**A.** In the Sinai Agreement of September 1975, the Egyptian and Israeli Government commit themselves to reach a final negotiated peace settlement. The exact text of the pertinent articles is:

*“Article 1. The agreement concluded by the parties, January 18, 1974, within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference, constituted a first step towards a just and durable peace according to the provisions of Security Council Resolution 338 of October 22, 1973.*

*They are determined to reach a final and just peace settlement by means of negotiations called for by Security Council Resolution 338. This agreement being a significant step towards that end.*

*Article 8. This agreement is regarded by the parties as a significant step toward a just and lasting peace. It is not a final peace agreement. The parties shall continue their efforts to negotiate a final peace agreement within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference in accordance with Security Council Resolution 338.”*

In the Disengagement Agreement between Israel and Syria for the Golan Heights of May 31, 1974, the two Government also agreed to the following:

*"H. This agreement is not a peace agreement. It is a step toward a just and durable peace on the basis of Security Council Resolution 338, dated October 22, 1973."*

In recent months, Egyptian President Sadat has stated several times his willingness to sign a peace agreement with Israel. For example, in a press conference with West German Foreign Minister Genscher on February 12, 1977, President Sadat said:

*"We are prepared today or tomorrow to sign a peace treaty in Geneva to end the state of war and restore normal relations in the area. On the other hand, Israel must fulfil its commitment regarding Security Council Resolution 242. This means Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories it occupied after 1967. We are prepared today and will be prepared tomorrow to sign a treaty no matter what guarantees Israel demands."*

Also in his speech on June 17, 1977, in San Francisco, Vice President Mondale pointed out that during his visit to Washington King Hussein of Jordan referred to a "just and lasting peace — one which would enable all the people in the Middle East to divert their energies and resources to build and attain a better future."

#### **10. Statement on the Middle East by members of the European Economic Community, 29 June 1977.**

*Meeting in London, the leaders of the European Economic Community, in a statement on the Middle East, called for the establishment of a national home for the Palestinians and claimed that no peace would survive without a solution for the Palestinians. This has been a reaffirmation of positions held by the Nine since 1973, which was based on the Arab reading of Resolution 242.*

At the present critical stage in the Middle East, the Nine welcome all efforts now being made to bring to an end the tragic conflict there. They emphasise the crucial interest which they see in early and successful negotiations towards a just and lasting peace. They call on all the parties concerned to agree urgently to participate in such negotiations in a constructive and realistic spirit: At this juncture in particular all parties should refrain from statements or policies which could constitute an obstacle to the pursuit of peace.

The Nine set out on many occasions in the past, for example, in their statements of 6 November 1973, 28 September 1976 and 7 December 1976, their view that a peace settlement should be based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and on:

- I.** The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force;
- II.** The need for Israel to end the territorial occupation which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967;
- III.** Respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries;
- IV.** Recognition that in the establishment of a just and lasting peace account must be taken of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

It remains their firm view that all these aspects must be taken as a whole.

The Nine have affirmed their belief that a solution to the conflict in the Middle East will be possible only if the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to give effective expression to its national identity is translated into fact, which would take into account the need for a homeland for the Palestinian people. They consider that the representatives of the parties to the conflict including the Palestinian people must participate in the negotiations in an appropriate manner to be worked out in consultation between all the parties concerned. In the context of an overall settlement, Israel must be ready to recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people: equally, the Arab side must be ready to recognise the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries. It is not through the acquisition of territory by force that the security of the states of the region can be assured: but it must be based on commitments to peace exchanged between all the parties concerned with a view to establishing truly peaceful relations.

The Nine believe that the peace negotiations must be resumed urgently, with the aim of agreeing and implementing a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the conflict. They remain ready to contribute to the extent the parties wish in finding a settlement and in putting it into effect. They are also ready to consider participating in guarantees in the framework of the United Nations.

#### **11. Press conference with President Carter, 30 June 1977.**

*In view of the many statements that were made in Washington, Jerusalem and Arab capitals, the President suggested that for the next three weeks, until the arrival of Prime Minister Begin in Washington, "we refrain from additional comments on specifics." Following are excerpts from the press conference:*

**Q.** Mr. President, Senator Javits says you are pushing Israel too far. Other Americans sympathetic to the Israeli position say worse, that you are perhaps selling Israel down the river.

My question is, first, do you think you are, and secondly, how difficult will it be for you to continue your policy if the American Jewish community sides with Mr. Begin instead of Mr. Carter?

**A.** I might say, first of all, that I look forward with great anticipation to the visit of Prime Minister Begin on the 19th of July. My determination is that the talks will be friendly and constructive, and also instructive for both him and me.

He will be received with the kind of friendship that has always been a characteristic of the American people's attitude toward Israel. An overwhelming consideration for us is the preservation of Israel as a free and independent and hopefully peaceful nation. That is pre-eminent. At the same time, I believe it has been good during this year, when I hope we can reach a major step toward a peaceful resolution of the Middle East, to have the discussions much more open, to encourage the Arab nations and Israel to frankly understand some of the feelings that each of them has toward the other and to address the basic questions of territories, the definition of peace, the Palestinian question.

I really think it is best for this next roughly three weeks before Mr. Begin comes that we

refrain from additional comments on specifics because I think we have covered the specifics adequately. And if I or someone in the State Department, or someone on my staff, emphasizes territory and the definition of peace, the immediate response is: why didn't you say something about the Palestinians, and so forth. So I believe that we have discussed it adequately.

I believe all the issues are fairly clearly defined. It is accurate to say that our own nation has no plan or solution that we intend to impose on anyone. We will act to the degree that the two sides trust us in the role of an intermediary or mediator and I still have high hopes that this year might lead toward peace.

But it will never be with any sort of abandonment of our deep and permanent commitment to Israel. And I have made this clear in specific terms to every Arab leader who has been to our country.

## **12. Statement by Prime Minister Begin to the National Convention of the Zionist Organization of America, 7 July 1977.**

*While endorsing President Carter's call for a political armistice, Mr. Begin elaborated his views on the meaning of preconditions for negotiating peace, the meaning of national security and the Israeli position. Citing international law, examples from other nations, and the geography of pre-1967 Israel, Mr. Begin explained why Israel could not return to the 1967 borders. He also asked that Presidents Sadat and Assad refrain from threatening Israel and making prior conditions for negotiations. Text:*

Mr. President, Mr. Chairman, His Excellency the Ambassador of the United States of America, our dear friend Mr. Lewis, our dear devoted friend Senator Dole, my colleagues in the Cabinet, your Honour the Mayor of Jerusalem, ladies and gentlemen, may I be permitted to start with a few words of gratitude to Senator Dole. We thank you Senator for the heartwarming words you uttered tonight. The Jewish people with all its suffering and persecution throughout the ages forgets its enemies and the wrongs done to it by them, but the Jewish people never forgets a friend.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I ask your permission and indulgence at this late hour to dwell and elaborate on three subjects. What is national security, what is the meaning of the preconditions for negotiating peace and the proposal for a political armistice. Ladies and gentlemen, national security may be a general concept and may be an excuse and cloak for ulterior motives. If for instance Russia claims that it must be with its army and its citizens in Eastern Prussia so I say it is a general claim of national security. Eastern Prussia was inhabited by the Slavs who were exterminated by sword and fire by the Prussian crusaders. Eastern Prussia was a corridor through which the German invading armies invaded Russian territory and in Eastern Prussia there was the general headquarters of the army led, as Churchill said, by the embodiment of all evil in mankind. But if on the other hand Russia signed with Japan in October 1956 a peace declaration which both countries proclaimed not to be a peace treaty and for 21 years Russia refuses to sign a peace treaty, because upon its signature they should return to Japanese sovereignty three small Kurile islands and mainly the two better known Shikotan and Habomai, if Russia claims that it

needs those two islands for national security, it is a cloak and an excuse, claiming that they need them in order to watch the American fleet in the Pacific Ocean. Now we have the two examples of one country — in one case it is genuine, in the other case it is an excuse. What is national security to us. I submit to you respectfully, ladies and gentlemen, that to us national security means the lives of every man and woman and child. We lived in our generation through the gravest tragedy ever noted in the annals of mankind. We lost a third of our people. It would mean 18 million Americans wiped out and amongst those who are slaughtered there were more than one million of our little children torn away from the arms of their mothers — our Sarala and Moshele never to come back to their mothers. But within the tragedy there is the most tragic event in human life. The men couldn't defend their wives and children. They looked upon the trains, they saw their little children, they saw their women, they couldn't do anything — all of them taken away. The man wept with blood in his heart and then he himself followed the families to the gas chambers.

Ladies and gentlemen, we do not live on foreign land, we live in our own homeland. We have a heroic, invincible Israeli army. The men of Israel will always defend the women and children of Israel, they are in honour and in duty bound to do so, but if they should place all the civilian population of Israel in the range of the enemies conventional Soviet supplied artillery, the range of which is 43.8 km, then there may be a moment when objectively it will be impossible for the men to defend even his own family. One Yom Kippur or one Pessah or one Channuka night from all over there may be a barrage by hundreds or perhaps thousands of guns supplied by communist Russia, our enemies, and then in a few moments an unthinkable number of casualties can be caused to us, to the civilian population. When we say national security we mean the lives of our women and children, and then we say, we lost a third of our people. Should we lose again, should we see again our own wives and our own children slaughtered by a bloodthirsty enemy. Never again should a bloodthirsty enemy raise his hand on a Jewish woman or a Jewish child. Some people say to us, but there are missiles, why do you worry about artillery. Missiles, ladies and gentlemen, in our time are produced in order not to be used. This is in the strategies of the world and this is in the tactics of our region. But it is no theoretical statement to have the experience.

During the Yom Kippur War both Syria and Egypt had hundreds of missiles, the Frog with a range of 100 kilometers and the Scud with a range of 230 kilometers. They used against us only three missiles, which, *Baruch Hashem*, we shot down on the way. They didn't cause any damage or casualties, they never repeated it again. They knew that there is always a response in time, in time, if missiles should be used on us. Artillery is a different story, conventional artillery — hundreds of thousands of guns and tens of thousands of aimed shells trained upon our cities and towns and moshavim and kibbutzim. Now in connection with this problem we heard again in one week twice the President of Egypt warning that if Israel should use atomic bombs, even retaliatory, then a million Egyptians would be wiped out, but he would retaliate and wipe out 2 million Israelis. The Egyptian people could live with 29 million population — what is going to happen with Israel.

May I say respectfully to President Sadat that Israel doesn't threaten anybody with atomic bombs — Israel doesn't threaten anybody with conventional arms — we wish the Egyptian people well, let us make peace and nobody will be hurt on any side with any weapons. We know the problems of the Egyptian people. Egypt is a vast country, but so are also her deserts and the Valley of the Nile, with that wonder of creation, the mighty river is narrow and now we have 38 or 39 million, but every year more than a million

mouths are added to be fed and there is not enough food and there is not enough medication and there is starvation among the masses and the Arabs we wish them well, we want peace for them. I subscribe to the statement made by His Majesty the King of Morocco, and he said, that if peace reigns in the Middle East and if out of peace in God's good time comes an alliance between Israel and the Arabs, the golden age may again return to the Middle East. Sarcastically in the United States of America President Sadat asked, well Israel wants economic relations with us, what actually does Israel possess to help us, to help us in our economy — well, we can help. We can help the Egyptian people as well, we can help them in developing agriculture, we can help them in industry, we have the skill, yes indeed — we have helped faraway people somewhere in Latin America, we can surely assist our neighbours.

Therefore I have an advice for President Sadat — Mr. President, don't spend your times on phantasmagoric thoughts and figures. A million Egyptians wiped out, 2 million Israelis killed, phantasmagoric, inhuman. To us every human being is a world to save which we expect and this includes also any Egyptian human being. We don't want Egyptian women to become widows, we don't want Egyptian children to become orphans. We want to live with them in peace and extend a helping hand to solve the real problems, the explosion of the population, so that everyone in this region can live in liberty, in security and in happiness.

What is, ladies and gentlemen, a precondition to the negotiation of peace. I will give two examples in order to be just to ourselves and to the others. President Sadat said to President Carter and to American public opinion and to Israel that if Israel wants so-called non-belligerency, nobody understands exactly what it means, perhaps it's the result of the super-knowledge of the English tongue by our former Foreign Minister Mr. Abba Eban. It's a long word, stemming from Latin. Very few people — very few international lawyers know what it means actually — it is not peace. Sadat said, for non-belligerency Israel must retreat to the lines of 4th of June, 1967, the lines preceding the Six Day War which my friend and colleague Mr. Abba Eban who is a very moderate man, terms the lines of Auschwitz and we are the generation of Auschwitz. And then have a so-called Palestinian state formed in Judea-Samaria and in the Gaza Strip, linked with a extraterritorial corridor through the Negev — in parenthesis I must add — when I said, the so-called Palestinian state, I didn't use these words for any derogatory purpose. We love and respect our own people. They have respect for any other people on earth, but it is a so-called Palestinian state, because I remember I was still a boy when at San Remo the Mandate for Britain was adopted by all civilized nations in 1922 and in its preamble it was stated, and then recognized and adopted by the United States of America — it was stated in the preamble to the effect — recognition having been given to the historical connection between the Jewish people and Palestine, every educated woman and man in those days knew that Palestine is only a foreign language translation of the land of Israel, Eretz Yisrael, and it appears for the first time in the Book of Shmuel and it was impossible to find a locksmith in Eretz Yisrael 3,000 years ago for the first time mentioned in the Bible.

It came into the languages of all the world, Palestine in English, Palestine in French and Palestino in Spanish, etc. From the days of the Emperor Adrianus who crushed the revolt of Bar Kochba and in order to crush it had to bring from Germany and Britain Roman legions. And he was not in a position to write to the Senate starting on the famous words — on all the Roman commanders and emperors — my army and I are well. He did not insert those words into his report in the Senate. Because so many casualties were

caused by the few against the many, by those who undertook the fight of right against might — because the Jews resisted for four years in revolt, against the rule of the Roman all-conquering empire — decided to sever any link between the country and the people although all the Romans including Vespasianus and Titus called our country Judea, Yehuda, he Adrianus renamed it Syria Palestina and since then for 18 centuries in all the languages, our country, our land is called, renamed, misnamed, Palestine, but the historical connection is between the Jewish people and Palestine — Eretz Yisrael, the land of Israel. So when President Sadat makes his proposal that we should give away, surrender Judea and Samaria and Gaza, and then allow them to mutilate our country through the Negev, through a corridor, remember the corridors, then we have a national consensus, without any distinction of party affiliation, our Parliament, except the communists, 5 members, completely subservient to Moscow, can say that we reject such a demand because our national security would then demand of us that we admit that we cannot anymore defend our women and children, but he is entitled to bring even such a proposal to Geneva, to the table, to the peace conference.

If, however, President Sadat should say and he does say, that Israel before we all meet in Geneva should in advance give a commitment that it will retreat to the lines of June 4, 1967, otherwise he will not go to Geneva, then we shall tell him, if so, stay in Cairo. Never in the history of nations has even one nation been asked to give a commitment of retreat before the negotiations started for concluding peace treaties and I respectively submit, ladies and gentlemen, that for too long has the Jew been an exception to all the rules. Now, we have a country and a flag and a parliament and a government and an army and the rules applying to all nations will apply to the same extent to the Jewish state, to the State of Israel. This is the meaning of the word preconditions or prior conditions, — now on our side we have a consensus on Jerusalem. All the parties except the communists believe and say and proclaim and declare that Jerusalem undivided and indivisible is and forever will be the capital of the State of Israel and will be of Jewish culture and the Jewish vision, for disarmament and eternal peace — as our prophets kneeling to the Almighty proclaimed — *urbi et orbi* — this they are going to say in Geneva as well. Indeed when we discuss in a free negotiation the claims and rights and conditions for a peace treaty between us and our neighbours, however, should we say to our neighbours before we go to Geneva, you must in advance commit yourselves to the idea that Jerusalem undivided and indivisible is the capital of Israel, that would be a prime condition or a precondition put out by us, we do not make such a prior condition. We do not put out such a precondition. The Arabs will have the right to come to Geneva and put out their claim on Jerusalem. We will put out our right to Jerusalem, as free men we shall discuss the conditions for the conclusion of peace treaties. No preconditions, no prior conditions by either side. I believe now, this term has been clarified and everyone will understand what is a precondition.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have a suggestion to make — I suggest to President Sadat and President Assad and King Hussein to have until we all meet as I hope in Geneva in accordance with our readiness starting from the 10th October this year at the convenience of all sides, including the two co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference, that may mean some convenience, before we meet in Geneva, let us have a political armistice. What does that term mean. From time to time from Cairo and from Damascus and from Rabat Amon there come declarations in which the rulers of those countries try to tell us what is our country, where lies our security, where should we live in the future. I suggest a political armistice, let them be silent, then we shall be silent. Everyone will be silent. We have some



time and they have patience. I suppose that my colleagues and I proved that we have patience. Some patience, for 29 years and even more for 46 years — since the 17th Zionist Congress in which our master and teacher proclaimed to the world, Zeev Jabotinsky, that Zionism means a Jewish state, not as a vision for future generations, but for us, for this generation, to save our people from the danger, from the horrible danger...

Let everyone be silent, let them not tell us where is our country, what is our country, where lies our national security. We can wait another few months, why not. Everyone will prepare the papers and the proposals and then we shall all meet in Geneva around the table, put all our cards on the table, no secret diplomacy, these are their proposals, these are our proposals, as it was the case with all nations after war — after war comes peace — in peace treaties you find all the essence of peace. The first article says and stipulates — termination of state of war. The second has the territorial clauses that determine the boundaries, permanent boundaries. Then come the diplomatic clauses in exchange of representatives. Then come political, economic clauses, exchange of merchandize, tourists, etc. Everything you find in the pattern of the peace treaty under international law.

However, I must say, we shall wait patiently for a month or two and we shall see what will be coming from those three capitals. However, I must say that if they will continue during this proposed political armistice to tell us what is our country and where lies our security, then an inescapable response, we shall tell them what is our country, where lies our national security and what is going to be the future of our children in this country. It is unavoidable, but for the sake of peace I suggest a political armistice over the military armistice — no more bloodshed and no more telling us in advance where and what is our homeland. We know very well where is our homeland and ladies and gentlemen, we are all assembled here, my fellow Zionists of America, members of the Cabinet, representatives of the Jewish Agency, our dear friends Senator Dole and Sam Lewis and their wives and we are all assembled here in a festive mood because we remember this is the 80th jubilee of the Zionist Organization of America, 80 years. In other words, you came into being together with the first Zionist Congress, 1897. Now we all are Zionists — let us for a while remember what was Zionism in those days when the Prince in Israel appeared, Theodor Herzl, and with him the great philosopher, Max Nordau and all the other founding fathers — the Jewish people was scattered, humiliated, persecuted with great flow from eastern Europe to America of the Statue of Liberty receiving the poor, giving them a country, pursuit of happiness — what was Zionism. A dream, we didn't have an army, we didn't have diplomats, we had only ideals and we had to console ourselves time and again with the famous saying of Herzl — if you really want it, it is no legend. For many years it seemed to be a legend — now ladies and gentlemen, we have great days — we have fulfillment — you are in Jerusalem — we are all in Eretz Yisrael — we have a country, a flag — we have our wonderful, serene, devoted young generation that we have never had since the days of the Maccabees and Bar Kochba — they proved their moral greatness and courage and valour. It is again a time of test, but *be'ezrat Hashem*, we shall all stand together and overcome the difficulties and make sure that the Jewish child from generation to generation will live in liberty in security, in peace with human dignity, in smiling happiness forever and ever — so help us God.

### 13. Press conference with President Carter, 12 July 1977.

*A week before the arrival of Mr. Begin in Washington, President Carter revealed that in a gesture to alleviate tension in the Middle East, President Sadat informed him that Egypt would comply with the Sinai agreement. This was a reference to a number of Israeli complaints to both the United Nations and to the U.S. about repeated Egyptian violations of the Sinai Agreement. Mr. Carter also said that both Sadat and King Hussein agreed that a Palestinian entity should be tied in with Jordan. He also stressed that there would be no American plan to be imposed on the nations of the Middle East. Following are excerpts from the press conference concerning the Middle East:*

**Q.** Mr. President, with Mr. Begin coming to visit, I would like to ask a question about the Middle East, a two-part question. When you talk about the necessity for a Palestinian homeland, are you thinking of locating that homeland in territory that at one time was Palestine, or in your mind could it be located anywhere?

The second part of the question is: Do you still believe, as you said a few weeks ago, that Israel eventually must withdraw, with only minor changes, to the pre-1967 borders?

**A.** I have not changed my opinion since the earlier statements that I made concerning the general outline of terms to be sought at a possible Geneva Conference.

We have never tried to define geographical boundaries for a so-called Palestinian entity. My own preference, which I have expressed since I have been president, and also as a candidate, was that the Palestinian entity, whatever form it might take, and whatever area it might occupy, should be tied in with Jordan and not be independent. But I don't have the authority nor the inclination to try to impose that preference on the parties that want to negotiate.

I think that in his coming over here to our country next week, on the 19th, that Prime Minister Begin is trying to bring with him an open mind, and an ability to go to a possible peace conference with all items being negotiable. He said this publicly and he has also sent me private messages to that effect.

I have seen an inclination in the Middle East in recent days toward an alleviation of tension. I got a private message from President Sadat, for instance, that he is going to make every effort again to comply with the Sinai Agreement.

He had a few extra troops in the territory that had been identified. He is withdrawing those. He authorized me to announce that he is returning with full military honors 19 Israeli bodies that had been left in Egypt. He has expressed his willingness to go to Geneva without prior commitments. He has had negotiations or talks lately with the King of Jordan. And they have agreed that the Palestinian entity ought to be tied in with Jordan.

So there is a general inclination on all parties for success, but I don't think it is advisable now for me to get any more specific than I have in the past.

Although I haven't changed my position, I want to reemphasize that we are not going to go to the different nations involved and say: "This is an American plan, you have got to accept it as a pre-condition to going to Geneva." It is what we think would be fair. It has been deliberately general in nature and the ultimate results would have to be agreed to by the Arab and Israel nations...

#### 14. Statement by Prime Minister Begin prior to his departure for the U.S., 15 July 1977.

*Days of discussions and preparations for his first visit to the United States as Premier, resulted in Mr. Begin's taking with him to Washington detailed proposals on how to proceed in the direction of peace. But as he left for the U.S. the Prime Minister refused to be drawn into an explanation of his plan.*

I am leaving for the United States filled with hope. Israel is an integral part of the free world, and is doing a great deal to preserve the freedom of man. Israel is not a burden for the United States but an ally to the U.S. and to the entire world.

I am conveying to President Carter greetings from the people of Israel, and its expectation and belief that he, President of the United States, as a friend of humanity, and therefore a friend of the State of Israel, expresses all those noble and uplifting humanitarian values that make life worth living.

On behalf of the entire Israel government, I bring to the President of the United States proposals for the manner in which peace could and should be achieved in the Middle East — a lasting peace, a genuine peace, a just peace.

Let it be known that this nation wants peace with all its heart and soul. Our people has been too often bereaved and orphaned. There is no home in Israel which has not lost someone — a father, a mother, a brother, a son — and the grief is always with us, to our last breath.

We detest war. We hate bloodshed. We do not threaten any of the surrounding nations. We seek to live in peace and understanding with all nations.

Last night we again heard a statement from President Sadat — this time from near Toronto — containing threats of war, stating that if we did not accede to his demands, he would not accede to ours. May I suggest to the Egyptian President that he stop uttering threats of war? This nation is not known to lack courage: we shall not panic at such threat, nor shall we give in to them. He wants peace. But if he is attacked, he will have the means to defend himself and to ward off the aggression. But as it was put in the days of yore in the Book of Moses: "Rise up, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered. And let them that hate thee flee before thee."

As to my journey to the United States: citizens of Israel, I need your prayers for success on the mission I am about to undertake on your behalf and for the sake of the people of Israel which is sending me. Your prayers will help me speak on your behalf for peace, for security, for the future of our children — and with the help of God we shall succeed.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister. Do you anticipate that in ten days' time, after your return from this visit and following the proposals you are bringing to President Carter, practical negotiations could begin here, in the region?

**A.** I hope so, Mr. Kittal. I am bringing complete proposals to President Carter and the U.S. Administration — concerning the framework in which it would be possible to start and continue negotiations for signature of peace treaties between Israel and the neighbouring Arab states.

The spokesman for the United States announced only a few days ago that, according to the U.S. view, it is important to strive for signature of peace treaties — i.e. an end to the

state of war. Determination of permanent boundaries, exchange of ambassadors, determining channels for economic relations and so on. All these are an integral part of a peace treaty. It is my hope that we shall soon begin practical negotiations on peace treaties at Geneva, and that we shall reach the point of signing them.

#### **15. Interview with President Sadat on A.B.C. Television, 19 July 1977.**

*In this interview, President Sadat again reiterated his views that the Palestinian problem is the core of the Arab-Israel conflict, and that Egypt trusts the United States to such an extent that if Washington plays its cards right, a solution could be found in a Geneva conference in one month. Excerpts:*

**Q.** Some three years ago in a film that we made about you, the Israeli Prime Minister Begin said: "Sadat is an enemy, an implacable enemy of Israel", are you?

**A.** I am not an enemy of anyone at all. I am an enemy only of aggression.

**Q.** It has been reported that Mr. Begin is toning down, at least publicly, his views on the occupied territories. Do you believe it?

**A.** I do not believe in anything that the Israelis say. I am sure that the Israelis also have their suspicions towards anything I say. We must say this and we must be, I mean, frank and we must be honest. Both sides, the Arabs and Israelis, have no confidence in each other.

**Q.** If Mr. Begin suggested to the U.S. — in the West Bank of the Jordan — that the administrative and economic matters reverted to Jordan and the military and security matters stayed with Israel, how would you respond?

**A.** I shall refuse point blank. Sure, I shall refuse. As you have stated, I have always said that the Palestinian problem is the core of the whole problem. It is not Sinai or the Golan Heights at all. All this has started with the Palestinian question, so if we are now concerned about establishment of peace in the area we should solve this problem.

**Q.** You have said repeatedly that the U.S. has all the cards to play in the Middle East. Are you convinced that the U.S. will play them?

**A.** We trust you. The Israelis, and this is very sarcastic, to which you are providing everything, they don't trust you. Well, they should trust you. If the U.S. will, with the special relations with Israel, do its efforts, I am sure in one month in Geneva we can achieve a final solution.

**Q.** President Carter has said that this will be the last time for any years when it is possible to bring the parties in the Mid East together. Do you agree?

**A.** I think that it is a very crucial moment that are in now. And I think, as I have said before, the Arabs have never been ready at any time during the last 29 years like today for a peaceful settlement.

**16. Remarks by President Carter and Prime Minister Begin on the White House lawn, 19 July 1977.**

*Before coming to Washington, Mr. Begin spent a few days in New York conferring with Jewish leaders. He also met with Rabbi Soloveitchik of Boston and the Lubavitch Rabbi in Brooklyn. In the welcoming ceremony at the White House lawn, both the President and the Prime Minister pledged themselves to work for the attainment of a peace settlement in the Middle East.*

**The President:**

This is a very important day in the history of our nation, and I think perhaps for the future of the Middle East and perhaps even for the future of the world.

We have with us a very distinguished visitor, Prime Minister Begin and his wife, Aliza. I am particularly thrilled to have them come here. We have had many distinguished visitors this year, but he is the first one who comes as the head of a nation who is junior to me. All the others have been presidents or prime ministers or kings much longer, so I welcome the chance to act as a senior statesman this morning, Prime Minister Begin.

We also have very important questions to discuss between us. We approach these conferences with deep common interests and with a sincerity of purpose that naturally binds us together.

Prime Minister Begin represents a nation which has just demonstrated again the importance of a true democracy, where people in an absolutely unconstrained expression of individual preference in open elections can decide who their leader will be.

This has been a great test for Israel, and the orderly transition of authority and responsibility from one political party to another has been carried out not only with peace and cooperation but I think with an enhancement of the confidence in the people of Israel in the future.

I think to me, having read the writings and biography of our distinguished visitor this morning, there is a great parallel between what Israel is, what it stands for, and what Prime Minister Begin is and what he stands for. He is a man who has demonstrated a willingness to suffer for principle, a man who has shown superlative personal courage in the face of trial, challenge, disappointment, but who has ultimately prevailed because of the depth of his commitment and his own personal characteristics. And this is a strong parallel with what his nation has been and is. He is a man of principle and a man of independence, and the nation of Israel is a people of principle and independence.

One of the important personal characteristics about Prime Minister Begin which I admire is his deep and unswerving religious commitment. This has always been a guiding factor in his consciousness and in his pursuit of unswerving goals. There is a quietness about him which goes with determination and a fiery spirit in his expressions of his beliefs to the public. And this is as it should be.

I was particularly impressed that the first official action of his government was to admit into Israel 66 homeless refugees from Vietnam who had been floating around in the oceans of the world excluded by many nations who are their neighbors, who had been picked up by an Israeli ship and to whom he gave a home. It was an act of compassion, an act of sensitivity and a recognition of him and his government about the importance of a home for people who were destitute and who would like to express their own individuality and freed-

om in a common way, again typifying the historic struggle of the people of Israel.

I have been encouraged by his statements that all the points of dispute with his Arab neighbors are negotiable; that this year might be a time of success in the so far frustrated efforts to bring permanent peace and security into the Middle East.

We share that common project. And although there might be differences in perspective and viewpoint between him and me, his nation and the United States, that common goal of finding a path to permanent peace will inevitably bind us together.

We are honored by his presence. We welcome him and his wife as our visitors.

And I would like to close my comments of welcome to him by quoting from Isaiah, from the Bible, which he and I both read, given to us by God, Whom we both worship. Isaiah said: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effects of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." (Isaiah 32:18)

Thank you very much.

### **The Prime Minister:**

(The Prime Minister spoke first in Hebrew. The translation is as follows: "Mr. President, I have come from the land of Zion and Jerusalem as the spokesman for an ancient people and a young nation. God's blessing on America, the hope of the human race. Peace to your great nation.")

Mr. President, I have come to you as the spokesman for an ancient people and a young nation. In our own time these people were strewn into the abyss. It had to extricate itself from the depths of the pits with the last vestige of its strength though an unequalled fight for national self-liberation of the few against many, of the weak against the strong, of right against might.

This is, Mr. President, the reason why we yearn for peace, pray for peace and shall do everything humanly possible and make all the possible endeavors to bring about real peace between us and our neighbors. Peace is inseparable from national security.

May I assure you, Mr. President, that to us that concept is no excuse for anything; neither is it a cloak of anything. To us, with the experience of physical annihilation and spiritual redemption, national security may mean the lives of every man, woman and child in Israel. The lives can be, under certain circumstances, directly threatened and put in jeopardy.

Mr. President, we in Israel see in you not only the fair citizen of your great, mighty country, but also the leader and the defender of the free world.

However, the free world has shrunk, indeed has been shrinking. It can be likened in our time to an island battered by bitter winds, by stormy seas, by high waves. Therefore, all free women and men should stand together to persevere in the struggle for human rights, to preserve human liberty, to make sure that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

Mr. President, I am deeply grateful for the heart-warming words you said to me and about me today, which I do not deserve. But your appreciation is very dear to my wife and myself. We thank you.

You mentioned the decision by the cabinet and myself in Israel to give refuge and haven to the Vietnamese refugees saved by an Israeli boat from the depths of the Pacific Ocean, threatened with drowning and exposure.

It was a natural act to us, Mr. President. We remembered, we have never forgotten, that boat with 900 Jews, having left Germany in the last weeks before the Second World

War for Cuba. When they reached the Cuban shores, their visas were declared not valid and then they were nine months at sea, traveling from harbor to harbor, from country to country, crying out for refuge. They were refused.

Eventually they went back to Europe. Some of them saved their lives. The majority of them went to the gas chambers. We have never forgotten the lot of our people, persecuted, humiliated, ultimately physically destroyed. Therefore, it was natural that my first act as Prime Minister was to give those people a haven in the Land of Israel.

Mr. President, now we shall have Hebrew-speaking Vietnamese in our country.

I share your view that we stand together for human liberty and dignity. And we may have differences of opinion, but we shall never disagree; we may only agree to differ.

Mr. President, my wife and I are deeply grateful to you and Mrs. Carter for the gracious hospitality you have bestowed upon us. We do hope that not in too distant a future we may reciprocate in Jerusalem. The people of Israel will receive you with an open and warm heart and with the traditional hospitality all of us inherited from old Abraham.

Thank you, Mr. President.

#### **17. White House statement following the first meeting between President Carter and Prime Minister Begin, 19 July 1977.**

*In their first hour discussion, both leaders agreed that momentum towards peace should be channeled through a Geneva conference, and there was a discussion of procedural matters relating to Geneva and Palestinian participation in such a conference. Other issues discussed were Israeli settlements in the territories, the forthcoming visit of Secretary Vance in the Middle East; the President assured Mr. Begin that there was no change in U.S. policy on the PLO.*

President Carter and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin met in the Cabinet Room for 2 hours. The meeting was also attended by the Vice President, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant Secretary of State Alfred L. Atherton Jr., United States Ambassador to Israel Samuel Lewis, and William Quandt of the National Security Council Staff on the American side; and Israeli Ambassador to the United States Simcha Dinitz, Advisor to the Prime Minister Shmuel Katz, Minister of the Embassy of Israel Hanan Bar-On, Director of the Prime Minister's Bureau Yechiel Kadishai, Political Advisor to the Prime Minister Eli Mizrahi, Military Secretary to the Prime Minister Brigadier General Ephraim Poran, and Advisor to the Prime Minister Yehuda Avner on the Israeli side.

The President began by repeating his personal pleasure at welcoming Prime Minister Begin to the White House so soon after his taking office last month. The President congratulated Mr. Begin once again on his accession to national leadership, and expressed confidence that this first visit will inaugurate the close working relationship natural to the leaders of two democracies with such long-standing and deep ties of friendship. Their talks were conducted in the spirit of mutual respect common to that warm friendship between our two peoples. The President and Prime Minister agreed that their meeting, and the others to follow here, mark a good starting point for seeking ways toward a just and

durable peace in the Middle East. They pledged their determination to achieve that peace, noting that imaginative and responsible statemanship is essential to overcoming the challenges posed.

The meeting this morning was devoted to a thorough and searching discussion of how to move toward an overall settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The President and Prime Minister each developed their ideas on the issues involved. They agreed that all the issues must be settled through negotiations between the parties based on United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 which all the governments directly concerned have accepted. They also agreed that this goal would best be served by moving rapidly toward the reconvening of the Geneva Conference this year, keeping in mind at the same time the importance of careful preparation. In this connection, they focused on the practical requirements for convening the Conference, looking toward Secretary of State Vance's forthcoming trip to the area for more talks with all the leaders involved. They expressed a hope that the Prime Minister's visit will help lay the groundwork for rapid movement toward negotiations.

In the course of the talk this morning on the diplomacy of peace, the President reaffirmed the enduring American commitment to the security and well-being of Israel. He assured the Prime Minister that any differences that may occur from time to time should not be allowed to obscure America's and his personal dedication to this historic American commitment. He asked the Prime Minister to express to the people of Israel the determination of the people of the United States to help them find true peace. Discussions on how to get negotiations started between the parties will continue this afternoon in the Prime Minister's meeting with Secretary Vance. No bilateral issues were discussed at this first meeting. The President and Prime Minister will meet again tonight at the working dinner which the President is giving at the White House, and in the Cabinet Room again tomorrow morning at 10:00.

## **18. Toasts between Prime Minister Begin and President Carter, 19 July 1977.**

*On the evening of 19 July, President Carter hosted a working dinner for Premier Begin and members of the Israeli delegation, which was followed by a short meeting between the President and the Prime Minister without their advisers. The greetings again afforded both leaders the opportunity to express their feelings about the Israel-America relationship and their expectations of the future.*

### **The President:**

First of all, I want to welcome all of you here tonight — the Members of the Senate, the Cabinet, my own staff, the distinguished Members of the House, also our very fine visitors from Israel, and Ambassador Dinitz:

I was very much concerned a few weeks ago when I discovered that this is a special night and I didn't know if we could induce anyone to come. The speaker pointed out again tonight that this is the All-Star game, the major baseball game of the year, and I was taken aback the day before yesterday when my wife came and said, "Jimmy, we ordinarily have



only 20 people come to your working suppers, and we are trying to cut the list down to 60.”

I couldn’t understand it. So I talked to Cy and talked to Dr. Brzezinski, and they said everyone wanted to come to meet the new Prime Minister of Israel. This is the largest group we have ever had, Mr. Prime Minister, and it is a great tribute to you and the interest in your country, and is demonstrative, I think, of the very close ties of friendship between the United States and the great nation of Israel. I am pleased to be the host tonight to such a distinguished man.

As I said in my welcoming remarks this morning, this is very gratifying to me. He is the only statesman I have had who is junior to me. I feel like a senior statesman tonight since he is very new in office. And he and I have a lot more in common.

Ambassador Dinitz was telling me that after the election somebody asked Prime Minister Begin how it felt to be unknown. He said he was known as Menachem who? — very similar to me. Except the question was asked about him after he was Prime Minister and asked about me when I first started running for President.

But he and I have a lot more in common than those ties that I have described to you. And we have explored some of them today. It has been one of the most gratifying and stimulating discussions that I have since I have been President.

We have had a chance to get to know each other personally, and it has been obvious to me that our guest is a strong leader. He is a man of deep convictions and unshakeable principle. He is a man of truth and quiet dignity. He is a man who is polite and very modest. The only times today when I have seen him somewhat disconcerted is when he thinks that the praise and the compliments are excessive, and he is embarrassed then.

I think this is a tribute to him, and I know that the people in Israel and the many friends in our country who look with favor on him and his leadership are gratified to have him come to see us.

We have had far-reaching discussions today. We have explored differences of opinion in a very blunt and frank fashion, and I think we have resolved some of the differences. Few still remain, but we have discovered and mutually recognized, in order to make them permanent the agreements that are inherent in the attitudes of our people.

We both feel that this year is a propitious time to move toward real, permanent peace in the Middle East, a recognition by all nations that Israel has a right to exist, to exist as a proud and independent nation, to exist permanently and to exist in peace. This is a basis on which we approach the coming crucial months.

We also recognize the sharp differences of opinion that exist between Israel and her Arab neighbors, the historical distrust that must be overcome. We also recognize the intense interest and legitimate concern and involvement of most all the developed nations of the world and many of those who are still developing in peaceful settlement of Middle East differences.

We recognize that the basic security of Israel must not only be guaranteed in military terms and from the viewpoint of leaders who are involved, but the security of Israel must be guaranteed in the minds and hearts of people who live in that country and in the minds and hearts of people who would disturb that security if they thought there was hope for success. There must be a reassurance of the staunch friendship that binds our country to Israel.

I have met with the Arab leaders who have been here to see me and whom I have met in Europe, and we have always made clear to them in the early stages of discussions that

the basic premise on which we approached a possible Middle East discussion leading toward progress and peace was our commitment to Israel.

We have also explored today some very sensitive questions, some that can prove to be embarrassing because of past statements made in the heat of anger or the heat of challenge or the heat of despair or the heat of depths of insecurity.

And with a new hope being generated, we see a need for a frank discussion of all the issues that in the past have appeared to be insuperable obstacles toward peace.

I have been very proud of the attitude taken by Prime Minister Begin, who has said all issues are negotiable and who has expressed publicly his hope that he and President Sadat and King Hussein and President Assad can meet with others in Geneva in October.

We don't know yet that we can resolve all the differences that might prevent such a meeting. But following this week, Secretary Vance will go to the Middle East to have private meeting with the Israeli leaders themselves.

The future, of course, is still in doubt. The historical differences still exist. But I am convinced, having spent hours and hours in a unanimous hope that peace might come and a realization of the great benefits that can accrue to all the people in the Middle East with the coming of security and peace.

We are determined to do our share not to try to impose our will on anyone but to act as a trusted intermediary and, to deserve that trust, to give the same points of view to all the parties who will be negotiating, not to mislead anyone, not to avoid a controversial issue, and wherever to open those controversial issues up to public security, public analysis, public debate, even when at times it creates some hopefully transient dissension among people who have strongly held opposing views.

But there is no way to postpone any longer those issues that some time in the future will be divisive but which have historically been divisive either for 29 years or 2900 years.

Finally, I would like to say this: Success this year is going to require a great deal of courage. As has often been pointed out, it is much more difficult to make peace than it is to make war because in searching for peace there has to be an accommodation, in searching for war there has to be an arousing of animosity and hatred and a using of innate dissension and distrust as a basis.

But the courage that exists in our fine visitor is one of the factors which encourages me to look toward great progress this year toward true peace in the Middle East.

We share a common religion. We share mutual economic trials, tribulations, successes and hopes. We are bound together politically, culturally, ethnically by blood relationships, and these common purposes and goals and characteristics provide a sure base which will withstand the trials and difficulties of a challenging year.

I look forward to it with a great deal of anticipation, and I am very proud tonight to welcome to the White House the new Prime Minister of Israel and to offer a toast to this good and decent and courageous man in whom the hopes of many are focused, and on the brave and courageous people of the great and courageous nation of Israel.

To the people and to you, Mr. Prime Minister.

### **Prime Minister Begin:**

Mr. President, after having met you, I can say it was a great day in my life to be here to speak to you, to listen to you. We have had very few good days in our lives in our generation. Most of the days were spent in struggle, in persecution, at times in being hunted, in dreams, in suffering. And the days of solace are not many.

This is one of the best days in my life, having met the President of the United States, having learned that this is a man, a great friend of humanity, a man of great understanding and feeling. And therefore, I can say now wholeheartedly a great friend of Israel.

Therefore, tonight, Mr. President, with your permission I will say something about what I believed to be, perhaps since my childhood, the moral greatness of America.

In 60 years, America has saved mankind from three very grave dangers. The first was Prussian militarism, which during the First World War almost trampled under foot all of Europe and ultimately the world.

1917 was a crucial year. There were mutinies in the French army. The great question was who is going to break whom? and then the outcry was heard throughout Europe: "The Yankees are coming". The army of General Pershing fought valiantly. Mainly, the spirit of the European armies, of the Allies rose, and then victory came.

The second time America saved mankind came during the period when, as Churchill said, all the embodiment of evil in mankind turned a great nation — a nation of poets and philosophers — into a blood-thirsty mob, thirsty first of all for Jewish blood. And in that hour, perhaps the darkest in our time, we lost a third of our people. That would mean 80 million Americans wiped out. Those are phantasmagoric figures which scientists make up in connection with the megatons. But megatons are produced never to be used. As we believe, all free men and all those who believe in divine providence, we have to live with those phantasmagoric figures to the last day on earth.

A dark age started in Europe and throughout the world. We should always tell the truth. There was a time when England stood alone resisting that barbarous tyranny. And there was a time when the Soviet armies fought heroically against the onslaught by the Nazi hordes.

However, whoever studied history does know and should admit that were it not for America — for America's might and America's spirit and faith in justice and liberty — England would have succumbed, Russia would have fallen, and then a dark age would have started perhaps for centuries, mankind never knew since the days of Nero and Caligula.

Ultimately, the United States won the day for all mankind. And so we were saved from the dark age under the Nazi tyranny.

After the Second World War, Mr. President, there is no doubt whatsoever were it not for America, the Soviet armies long ago would have reached the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. There wasn't enough strength in Europe left to withstand such a possible onslaught. It was only because of America that part of mankind was saved from Soviet slavery, from Communist subjugation. This struggle still goes on, as we can see a tendency to take over country-by-country by proxy.

This is the moral greatness of America. It saved three times in two generations, in 60 years, all the nations, all mankind. We free men bow to that greatness of America.

America knew crisis as well — economic and moral crisis. But as we follow those 200 years of American history, as we read Jefferson and the story of Lee and Hamilton, and Citizen Tom Payne, and the marvelous life story of Abraham Lincoln, who actually renewed all the great precepts taken from the Bible — when we follow this wonderful story, we see that after each crisis America becomes more democratic, more just, more free and more devoted to our human tasks.

Now, with your permission, Mr. President, a few words about little Israel. And I do not say so for the sake of artificial modesty — we are a very little country. We shall always be.

And in comparison with America's might, we are a very small, very small, country and people in the Middle East. However, we rose in suffering and in heroism.

Sometimes, as I heard today as well, journalists have an undertone when they ask me about the Bible. I am not ashamed to say that I do believe with all my heart in Divine Providence. Were it not for divine providence, where would we be today or tonight? We were sentenced to death, all of us, and the life of every one of us is a present. We could have been dead in the trains and in the camps, as the wife of my friend and secretary, a young lady, was, having spent three years in Auschwitz, having looked every day upon that smoke coming from the chimneys and knowing what happened.

So we suffered. And when people ask me about the Bible, then I can say our generation, my generation, is almost a Biblical generation.

Of course, we don't dare compare ourselves with our ancestors. But what was the Biblical generation? They achieved everything by suffering and with heroism. They suffered very much until they reached the Promised Land. And Moses, the great liberator, wasn't even allowed to come into the Promised Land.

That is our generation. Everything we achieved was through great suffering, almost inhuman suffering, having lost a mother, a father, a brother, a little nephew, everything dear and near to you being bereaved and orphaned, asking the question, "wherefore will come my salvation?" and then saying to ourselves, "rise for a just cause, endanger your life, it is a present given to you, and create conditions in which never again will an enemy raise his hand on a Jewish child and escape with impunity."

So we did fight and we suffered and there was great heroism and singing of the *Hatikvah* with the last breath in one's lungs. But ultimately, with God's help — indeed, only with God's help — we won the day, we have a country, a parliament, a government, a land to till, cities to build, the fields to make green, to take in our persecuted people from scores of countries, from the Arab lands. We took in 800,000 of our bretheren from the Arab countries. The others came from Europe, what we call in Hebrew *She'erit Hapleyta* — the term is absolutely unknown to other nations — the remnants of our people from generation to generation, we are the remnants of the remnants.

And now we want to have peace, more than anything in the world to have peace. We didn't have in our time one day of real peace there with all the tragic events, and in our own land, terror and bloodshed, always living on God for our people and for human liberty and for human dignity. This is the story of our generation.

Therefore, Mr. President, I have come to you, as the democratically-elected Prime Minister of Israel, with a deep sense of responsibility. May I inform you, sir, that our spiritual leadership, the Rabbinate, the day before yesterday asked the people to pray for the success of my mission. And they recited a special song to say every day. People praying for the success of one's mission.

This is some phenomenon because they know we have a great friend, the United States of America. And we, Israel, are a faithful ally of the United States. We do whatever we can to serve the free world. We contribute to the national security — as tonight I will show you, Mr. President — to the national security of the United States.

We are a guardian of human liberty and democracy in the Middle East. We look around, I don't see any country in our neighbourhood which can, through a free vote of citizens, say one leadership should take a vacation and there should be another leadership, and then the transfer of power is being carried out in so orderly a way — my predecessor waiting for me in his office, I coming in and shaking hands, expressing the best feelings for

each other, and then the predecessor saying: “now, take over,” and I going into my office and then indeed giving the first order to bring in the Vietnamese refugees into our country.

Democracy is beautiful. When you look at what is happening under tyranny or whatever comes, and you compare democracy, as Churchill used to say, it also has its faults, but basically how beautiful is democracy.

We are proud that we are a democracy, as the United States carried the banner of democracy.

This is our contribution to freedom, national security of the free world. We shall continue to do so to the best of our ability.

Our talks, Mr. President, I do hope, first of all, will result in the deepening of friendship between our countries. One day, one day — I pray for it — perhaps I will be able to say in pride I will call you my friend, in pride. And then our talks may result in progress towards that goal called peace.

We must have the sense of urgency, but we also must have some patience. May I respectfully submit that I prove to have patience. Some patience it was.

You, too, Mr. President, showed that you have patience. So some patience must be guarded, because it is an historical conflict, it is not a territorial problem. For 19 years, there was no peace, for 19 years we didn't have the second part of Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, not one day of peace.

The question arises: Why not? Were it a territorial conflict, there was no reason not to make peace with Israel. These are historical conflicts. We came there. We have come there by right to the land of our ancestors. But it was not recognized and time again attempts were made to destroy us.

Sometimes you have a defeated aggressor claiming he is the wronged victim. But we know what happened. We only defended ourselves against attempts, repeated, to destroy our people, our dreams, our independence and ultimately our lives.

With a sense of urgency on one hand and some patience on the other, I think we can build a foundation of peace in the Middle East and the recognition of justice for all and fairness for all, as we believe.

We don't hate our neighbors. We don't want to humiliate them at all. We never wanted to defeat them. We never wanted to wrong them. But we had to defend ourselves. This is the whole story, as they used to say in those ancient days, on one foot. I can only speak very shortly standing on one foot, the whole story.

We are hopeful; we are optimistic. We have to be. Our people have always been optimistic.

So, Mr. President, the day after tomorrow I will be leaving Washington with a staunch heart, grateful for your gracious hospitality, for your friendship, for the encouragement you gave all of us, for your leadership.

At the time, ladies and gentlemen, the British used to say, because of their own reasons, thank God for the French army.

Now, paraphrasing that saying, I will raise my glass and say with all my heart, thank God for America.

To the President of the United States, the leader and defender of the Free World: *le'chaim*.

**19. Remarks by President Carter following his second meeting with Prime Minister Begin, 20 July 1977.**

*Both leaders agreed that the next move in the direction of peace in the Middle East should be the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference in October. Their talks focused on the procedural aspects of such a conference. Even though Secretary of State Vance was scheduled to visit the Middle East long before the elections in Israel, it was decided that his visit, in the month of August, would be used to reach an agreement on the working of a Geneva Conference. Following are replies of the President to questions after his second meeting with Mr. Begin:*

**Q.** Mr. President, how did this morning's talks go?

**A.** They went very well. The Prime Minister is going to have a press conference later on today, but I don't think the meetings with him could have been any better, and I believe that we have laid the groundwork now, barring, some unforeseen difficulty, that will lead to the Geneva Conference in October.

Secretary Vance will be leaving the 1st of August to visit the Arab countries and also will visit Israel, and we believe that, based on my past discussions with Arab leaders and their desires, that the positions taken by Prime Minister Begin will lead to a convening of the Geneva Conference.

**Q.** You once said there was no use to go to Geneva if it were not going to succeed. What are its chances of success?

**A.** That is difficult to predict. Obviously there are still strong matters and differences that have to be resolved between the Arab and Israel leaders, but we have not found any of them to be so adamant in their positions that they are not eager for accommodation. I think they all see that the transcendent goal is peace.

They have all agreed that the basis for the negotiations themselves will be United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338.

They see that permanent peace is the prerequisite for accommodation, the definition of what will be done, and that territorial adjustments must be made.

There are obviously differences in how these territory questions should be resolved and they all recognize the difficulty of the Palestinian question. But they are all eager to meet now.

I believe I can say that accurately, and we see the Geneva Conference as being very likely, the format of it, the participation there. And although there are strong differences between the Arab and Israeli leaders on territories and the Palestinian question, they want to work it out.

**Q.** How do you find Prime Minister Begin as a personality to deal with?

**A.** I like him very much. As I said in my welcoming remarks, he is a man of courage and principle and I have found in my discussions with him that my assessment was accurate.

**Q.** Is he easy to get along with?

**A.** Yes.

**20. Press conference with Prime Minister Begin, 20 July 1977.**

*After his three meetings with President Carter, Mr. Begin revealed the Israeli plan which consisted of participating in a Geneva Peace Conference in October, on the basis of Resolution 338 which makes reference to Resolution 242. There should be no prior conditions to the peace conference by either side and no prior commitments. The conference should lead to the signing of peace treaties. Israel will not deal with the PLO, and if Geneva cannot be reconvened because the Arab states would insist on PLO participation, Mr. Begin suggested negotiations through the good offices of the U.S. or proximity talks.*

Ladies and gentlemen of the press.

I feel I must start with a personal statement. The elections in Israel were a surprise. I apologize to you for the surprise. And secondly, my name does not rhyme with Fagin.

And now into the merits of the main problem. The discussion with the President went very well indeed. The President was very gracious to me. We held discussions for nearly five hours. Three official meetings and one long nocturnal talk in complete privacy. I think I can say that we established a personal rapport which will, I hope, work not only in the next few months but for years to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen: No confrontation between the United States and Israel. Some people were apprehensive lest such confrontation arise out of the talks. I can assure and reassure all the friends of Israel and of America: There isn't any confrontation between our two countries. To the contrary, during the last few days friendship between the United States and Israel has been deepened. And that personal rapport between the President and myself will be helpful in the future.

I am very impressed by the personality of the President of the United States, by his warm heart and by his extraordinary intelligence, by his quick grasp of the crux of the problem, and by his capability to take decisions. I said during the ceremony at the White House lawn that we see the President of the United States not only as the first citizen of this great country, but also as the leader and the defender of the free world. After our conversations, I was fortified in this belief.

We shall continue to work together for the common interests of the United States and Israel and the free world.

On behalf of the Government of Israel, I brought to the President a proposal about the framework for the peace-making process. For nearly two weeks, I had to reply to all the questions about the contents of that decision taken unanimously by the cabinet in Israel: Please, out of respect for the President, he should be the first man to hear from me. Believe me, those ten days were days of very heavy pressure, but somehow I withstood it. And indeed, the President was the first man, after the Government of Israel, to hear their decision to hear about our proposals.

The proposals themselves shouldn't be any secret to public opinion, and I will now explain the contents of what we call: "The framework for the peace-making process".

The Government of Israel will be prepared, beginning October 10th, 1977, to participate in a new additional session of the Geneva Peace Conference. It should be reconvened by the two co-Chairmen on the basis of Paragraph Three of United Nations Security Council Resolution 338, which stipulates —

*"The Security Council decides that immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire,*

*negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at the establishing of a just and durable peace in the Middle East."*

The Government of Israel acknowledges that Resolution 338 includes and makes reference to Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22nd, 1967. Participation in the reconvened session of the Geneva Peace Conference: Accredited delegations of sovereign states will participate in the reconvened session of the Geneva Peace Conference, namely, representatives of Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan. And may I add that if the suggestion is made that Lebanon participates, we will agree.

The participating states in the Geneva Peace Conference will present no prior conditions for taking part in the conference. I have to dwell and elaborate on the term "no prior conditions", because sometimes it was not only interpreted, but also misinterpreted. To clarify the issue, I will give two examples on both sides.

As you know, ladies and gentlemen, the President of Egypt demands that Israel should withdraw totally to the lines of 4th of June 1967, the lines preceding the Six-Day War; that a so-called Palestinian state be formed in Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and they be linked through an extraterritorial corridor. And this demand, if it should come at any time into realization — I believe it won't — would create the following situation: We would be nine miles from the seashore, ten miles from the seashore, and maximum, twenty miles from the seashore. Around Netanya, almost in the middle of the country, we would be only nine miles from the seashore. And there, by an onslaught of a tank column, the country can be cut into two in ten or fifteen minutes. Soviet artillery now has a range of forty-three kilometers eight hundred meters, so, in other words, from every point of what was in the past termed green line, the conventional artillery possessed by our neighbours can reach every city and town and township, in fact, every house, in fact, every man, woman and child. It would mean the beginning of the end of our statehood. Independence and liberty.

However, the Geneva Conference should mean an open negotiation. Therefore, I state here that President Sadat or his emissary will be entitled to bring his proposal to the conference table at Geneva. However, should President Sadat say in advance: "You, the Israelis, have to accept my demand so that I should come to the conference table. You, the Israelis, should accept my proposal in advance of the Geneva Conference" — that is a precondition, and that will not be accepted, that will not be accepted by Israel.

No preconditions by either side.

For the sake of objectivity, I will give an example on our side: We have a national consensus, in other words, all parties — except one, the communist party, which is completely subservient to Moscow, agree that Jerusalem should stay undivided and should be the capital city of the State of Israel. Such is and will be our proposal but should we ask that the Arabs accept in advance that proposal by Israel so that the Israelis come to the peace conference at Geneva, that would mean an Israeli precondition. And as it is a precondition or a prior condition, we don't put it out at all.

They are entitled to bring their proposals. We shall be entitled to bring our proposals. And the negotiation will be a free negotiation between the parties concerned, as it is the law and the practice in the relations amongst nations. No prior conditions.

To the same effect, I will add: No prior commitments by either side. Prior commitments will not be asked by either side. Prior commitments will not be given by either side. This is the basis for a free negotiation.

At the public session of the reconvened Geneva Peace Conference, the representatives of the parties will make public statements. When the session, the public session, comes to a



conclusion, we suggest that the instrument for negotiations of peace treaties between Israel and the neighbouring countries be established. And we call that instrument three — or four, if Lebanon is added — mixed commissions. One an Egyptian-Israeli commission, a Syrian-Israeli commission, and a Jordanian-Israeli commission, and there may be a Lebanese-Israeli commission.

The chairmanship of these commissions will rotate between the Israeli emissary and the emissary of the neighbouring country. In the framework of these three or four mixed commissions, peace treaties between the parties concerned will be negotiated and concluded.

I have to dwell and elaborate on the term “peace treaties.” I was glad to hear some two weeks ago the spokesman of the State Department who states that there should be peace treaties between Israel and the neighbouring countries. Our concept is that this is, as every authority on international law will prove, the usual, the accepted way to bring about the termination of a state of war and of war itself, through a peace treaty.

There are a few exceptions, admittedly. For instance, Germany after the Second World War did not yet sign a peace treaty, for reasons which in themselves are exceptional. There are two Germanys, with Russia in Eastern Prussia, the Allied armies on German soil, etc. But this is an exception which proves the rule, because both after the First World War and after the Second World War, peace treaties were signed between the parties concerned.

The United States of America and her Allies also signed peace treaties with Japan after the Second World War. The Soviet Union signed a peace declaration with Japan in October 1955 in Moscow, which is declared by the signatories not to be a peace treaty. And the Soviet Union promises in that document that when a peace treaty is signed between the two countries, they will return the Kurile Islands, Shikotan and Habomai to Japanese sovereignty, but the first article, even of that document, is that the state of war between the two countries has come to an end.

Now when we say a peace treaty, we actually include all the elements of the essence of peace, which are lately being discussed. The first article of any peace treaty is to the effect: “the state of war has been terminated.” Then come the territorial clauses. A chapter of a peace treaty in which you determine — also with the help of a map attached to the peace treaty — the boundary, the permanent boundary, between the countries involved. Then comes the chapter about diplomatic clauses, and there you give a solution for diplomatic exchanges. Then comes the chapter about economic clauses, and other chapters, sometimes about tourism, sometimes about fisheries, about specific problems concerning, as they put it usually, “the high contracting parties.”

So when we say a peace treaty, we mean mainly the termination of the state of war. The determination of permanent boundaries, diplomatic relations, the economic clauses, etc. And when the three or the four mixed commissions will work out the conditions and the details of those peace treaties and they will conclude them, then another session of the Geneva Peace Conference will be reconvened, and the peace treaties so concluded will be signed by the parties concerned. And then, with the famous stipulation about ratification at a proper time, they will come into force, and there will a commitment by all the parties concerned.

Such is the framework proposed by us for the peacemaking process. I believe it can be used. I believe it can bring us nearer to real peace in the Middle East.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, my final remark in the opening statement. Even before you put this question, I will realistically assume that the problem of participation will arise. Namely, that the Arab countries may ask or insist on the participation, in addition to the

state delegations, of the organization called P.L.O. We cannot accept participation of that organization. They declared in their Covenant or Charter, in Article XIX of their Charter, that the State of Israel is null and void fundamentally. They also declare that only those Jews (preceding the) "Zionist invasion", as they put it — in other words, until the proclamation of the Balfour Declaration — will be regarded Palestinians, and all the others, as the assumption goes, will have to leave the country. And other articles whose contents are quite known.

So we do know what is their design. What they strive for. To put it bluntly and simply: Their design is to destroy our country and to destroy our people. Therefore, they cannot be a partner to any negotiations with Israel.

If, therefore, the Arab countries will make it impossible to reconvene a full-fledged additional new session of the Geneva Conference, through insisting on the participation of the organization called P.L.O., then we must look for alternatives. And we suggest two alternatives:

One, that the good offices of the United States be used to bring about the establishment of the three or four mixed commissions through diplomatic contacts with the respective capitals. That's one possibility, and it is based on the method used in 1949 during the negotiations for the armistice in Rhodes Island. It is a well-tried method which brought about very good results. The Armistice Agreements — the three Armistice Agreements, with Syria, with Jordan, and with Egypt — are documents of great national importance. In one of their articles it is stipulated there that those Armistice Agreements are an indispensable step towards the establishment of a full peace in Palestine. Twenty-nine years, twenty-eight years elapsed then. So we are late. And during the intervening years there were four wars. It is very regrettable.

Yet, let us start now, at least now, with the delay of almost a generation, and let us carry out the mutual pledge given by the parties concerned that we shall establish a real peace. So, we suggest as one of the alternative possibilities to have such mixed commissions established through diplomatic contacts in the respective capitals. And they may sit either in their respective capitals or on any neutral soil, as the decision will be taken by the parties concerned.

The second alternative possibility is what is termed proximity talks. In 1972 the United States Government suggested that proximity talks be held in New York. In other words, an Israeli delegation and an Arab delegation, and the United States delegation giving their good offices to bring the parties together. We will be willing to adopt such a method as well.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of Israel adopted this decision to bring to the knowledge of the President, and of public opinion at large: our proposal for the framework of the peace-making process. Now it depends on the other side whether it will be put into realization.

We want peace. We yearn and pray for peace. We want real peace based on security, without which peace becomes devoid of real meaning.

We should start negotiating seriously peace treaties, and here we give the instruments which are necessary for such negotiations to be conducted and concluded successfully. We hope it will mean progress towards real peace in the Middle East.

**Q.** Ladies and Gentlemen, with your permission, I would like to present my question in Hebrew on behalf of Israel television.

**Prime Minister Begin:** speak Hebrew with an English accent.

**A.** I was asked the following question in Hebrew, without any accent: After we brought the proposals before the President, what was his reaction? Of the President? Out of respect for the President and his closest advisers, I must answer that such a question should be put to the President and his advisers. I cannot speak for them. I can only say that our conversations were very cordial and there was understanding for the proposals we made as a possibility to have the momentum for the peace-making process.

**Q.** The last Israeli Government — and I hope I'm not misquoting — said that they would not check the credentials of any Palestinians. Of course, who might turn up in a Jordanian and/or an Arab Delegation. Do you take the same position? Indeed, obviously you want to bar Yasser Arafat, but can Palestinians be part of a delegation, even P.L.O. officers? And if so, have you told the President that?

**A.** According to your information, may I ask you a question? A Jew usually answers by asking another question. May I ask you a question? — Did the former government accept Arafat as a Palestinian within the Jordan delegation? I never heard about it... Therefore, I would like, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, to say that as the previous did, so we will do: Namely, if Palestinian Arabs participate in the Jordanian delegation, no objection. And we are not going to search for anybody's credentials. But the organization called P.L.O. cannot participate in that delegation. Palestinian Arabs can.

**Q.** Israel television last night broadcast a story attributed to a briefing given by Mr. Dayan which outlined more or less what you have just told us. Today we have reaction to that from Egypt calling it unacceptable. Based on that reaction, do you feel that there is really a realistic chance for reconvening the Geneva Conference?

**A.** First of all, I would like to ask whether you don't know that I've always troubles with Israeli television, and don't rely on any so-called disclosures. I'm not so sure whether the information given — I didn't listen to it — was accurate. If it was given from the session of The Foreign Affairs Committee. The so-called leak — with the experience we all have, a leak may be dangerous. It is never accurate. Now, there are reactions you quoted. Perhaps it is the first reaction. We shall be patient and we shall ask for reconsideration. We do believe that this is a good basis for starting the peace negotiations.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, the American Government is on record in the United Nations as interpreting 242 to require Israeli withdrawal — some Israeli withdrawal: not total Israeli withdrawal — on all three fronts, including the West Bank. In your statement, in your plan, is any withdrawal at all contemplated on the West Bank?

**A.** I will gladly answer that question, but you will have, I believe, indulgence when I say that this problem of the territorial issue, which is part — an integral part — of the peace treaty, will be brought in Geneva to the Conference table. I suggested, before I left my country for the visit to the United States to all the Arab rulers that we should have until the Geneva Conference is reconvened a so-called political truce. We have a military ceasefire. We shall have also a political truce. Let everybody withhold statements concerning these or other details, including the territorial issue. This issue will be brought to the Geneva Peace Conference table. This is our approach. And therefore, until the Geneva Conference reconvenes, I will not go into any details concerning the territorial issue.

**Q.** If I may follow that up — the reason I asked is you have been quoted, either correctly or erroneously, as having said that the Israeli government would not give up a single inch of the West Bank, and I understand you now not to be specifically excluding some compromises, territorial compromises, on the West Bank. Can you clarify at least your earlier statements?

**A.** No, I cannot. I cannot becloud the issue through further statements. All the quotations are legitimate. But I must tell you that I'm ready to, in the limits of my financial capability, to pay any sum if you prove that in any of my speeches or my articles I ever used the words "not an inch." And as far as the real issue is concerned, I stand by my previous answer.

**Q.** Do you think that there can be real peace, in your terms, as long as Israel continues to occupy the West Bank and other portions of Arab Land?

**A.** Mr. Valeriani, isn't it a leading question?

**Valeriani:** I hope so.

**Prime Minister Begin:** You hope so? So, I hope to be able to answer you as I did to your colleague. All the questions on this issue I will answer in the very (same) way: everything concerning the territorial issue will be brought — I believe by both sides — to the conference table at Geneva.

**Q.** Did President Carter ask you or press you for what your positions might be if and when a Geneva Conference convenes. And if so, what were your answers?

**A.** No pressure was exerted by the President of the United States. It was a free discussion.

**Q.** Did he ask you what your positions might be at the Geneva Conference?

**A.** We had a discussion. There were questions. There were answers. Sometimes the President asked a question. Sometimes I asked a question. The questions were good and the replies were even better.

**Q.** On the question of participation, once again, at a Geneva Conference, could any known member of the Palestine Liberation Organization participate as a member of the Jordanian delegation at such a conference? Your answer was not clear enough the first time around.

**P.M. Begin:** It was not clear?

**Kalb:** No.

**P.M. Begin:** Now it will be clear.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, the President this morning after your meeting, said he thought the groundwork was now cleared away for the convening of the Geneva Conference in October. Most of us, who are, of course, ignorant of the contents of your discussions, have been assuming that the question of the Palestinians in or out of Geneva was a major problem that had to be resolved before there could be a Geneva Conference. Did you learn something from the President that we don't know about the Arab position on Palestinians being at Geneva?

**A.** The President as I told you, I was very much impressed by his personality and I listened to him very attentively, as I said, for nearly five hours, and we had a free discussion, as befits free men, friends, and, as I believe, also allies.

**Gwertzman:** You didn't answer the question.

**A.** Well, I was interrupted by a colleague, so what can I do? Your colleague is waiting for the end of my remarks. So I repeat. It was a free discussion. The President touched on many problems. If he said that now the groundwork was laid for the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference, I am very glad. I didn't hear that statement. You quoted it. I am very glad about it.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, I'd like to follow that up by asking if you have any indication from any source that the Arab states will accept the position that no person who is known as a P.L.O. official can be permitted to go to the Geneva Conference, and yet such a conference can be...

**A.** I don't speak for the Arab countries, sir. I can only say this: we stand by the statement made by the previous government and by me, namely that Palestinian Arabs can participate in the Jordanian delegation. We will not look for their credentials. But if the question was: "A known member of the P.L.O. should participate," then it means that the P.L.O. participates, and therefore I answered in the negative, for the same reason the previous government did so. We cannot negotiate with the organization called P.L.O.

**Q.** We have been told by American officials that there are three major areas that are necessary to a Middle East settlement, and they've stated it in different ways. But they've said one involves the nature of peace and another involves territories and another involves a Palestinian entity. We were told at the White House yesterday that President Carter repeated these principles in his discussions with you as part of the conversations that you had. Will you accept the American position that these three matters are necessary to a Middle East settlement?

**A.** My dear friend, you want to cause a slip of my tongue. Please forgive me: I am myself a journalist. I understand your curiosity. You would like more and more to know about this and that problem before the Geneva Conference convenes. But, my friend, besides being a journalist, I am also the Prime Minister of Israel. I have a responsibility. I conducted very serious and sincere talks with the President and his advisers. And everyone now — let me say: the United States Government, Israel. I hope other governments as well — wants to go to Geneva. We stand on the principle that there are no prior conditions on any issue. That no prior commitments can be asked or given on any issue. Let me stand on that principle. And in Geneva, it can be convened — the proposal is for the Geneva Conference to be convened quite soon, in a few months' time. I don't think it is an exaggeration in this delicate situation to ask friendly journalists to be indulgent and to have some patience. Look at me. I had patience. Some patience. Have patience for a few months, and then all the proposals will be brought to Geneva.

**Q.** In your June 21st speech to the Knesset: you specified as the basic outline of your Government's policy: "Equal rights for all citizens and inhabitants, regardless of religion." And my question, sir, is... does this mean, at long last, that in Israel Reform rabbis will be given equal rights with Orthodox rabbis? and has Minister Josef Burg — I believe I'm pronouncing his name right — agreed with this?

**A.** Well; I cannot say that this issue will be debated at the Geneva Conference.

**Q.** The rabbis are concerned, sir, that you've made a lot of concessions to the National Religious Party.

**A.** I'm going to have in New York a meeting with Reform and Conservative rabbis, and I'm going to speak to them directly and to explain to them that issue, next week.

**Q.** I understand that this morning you had a chance to discuss bilateral issues with the President, and yesterday you discussed these issues with Secretary of Defence Harold Brown. On the important questions, such as co-production rights for the F-16 and funding for Israel's Chariot tank, the Merkava, did you get responses that were positive, or are you still concerned about the current state of the Administration reply to Israel's needs for continued military support?

**A.** First of all, I would like to explain that everything discussed with the President was of bilateral interest — the Geneva Conference is a bilateral interest to America, to Israel, to other countries as well. So we discussed many bilateral problems. As far as your specific question is concerned, I can assume that during the day, an announcement will be made by the United States Government — during the week, yes, during the week, an an-

nouncement will be made by the United States Government... on a number of items it will be a positive announcement.

**Q.** Carter's policy is based on attempting to get control of Saudi petrodollars by using Israel as a weapon of blackmail. Now, I'm not asking you to comment on that, obviously. My question is the following: there are a lot of moves being undertaken now within Europe, by King Hassan of Morocco, etc. to set up a situation in which a Geneva Conference could take place heading toward an overall settlement essentially over the head of what Carter is trying to do, the control that he's trying to maintain. This settlement would be based on content first, rather than just form: on a debt moratorium for Israel and Egypt in particular, and then for a reasonable development policy. I would like to ask your frank comment on what the possibilities are for moving in that direction...

**A.** Ma'am, there is no basis whatsoever for your assumptions. President Carter doesn't use Israel for any purpose whatsoever. President Carter is a great friend of humanity, and therefore a great friend of Israel. And there is no assumption of Israel being used by President Carter for any purpose.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, a follow-up question on that, on the role of the United States, now: do you see the United States and do you see Secretary of State Vance, in particular as performing a useful role in presenting its own suggestions and its own ideas of an outline of a Middle East settlement when Mr. Vance goes to the Middle East in early August?

**A.** Mr. Vance will go to the Middle East: he will visit Israel on the 7th or the 8th of August. And, of course, every government is entitled to make proposals. What we asked for — and I think it's a very reasonable proposal — that until the Geneva Conference reconvenes, that there shouldn't be any pronouncements concerning the essence of the Geneva Conference negotiations. Every government is entitled to make any proposals.

**Q.** Both you and President Carter are known to be deeply religious men, well acquainted with Biblical quotations. I would like to know to what extent those feelings and your knowledge of the Bible entered into your discussions, and were there any specific references to Biblical...

**A.** President Carter several times, beginning with the reception on the White House lawn, stressed the fact that he's a man of faith, and so am I. And he repeated that statement yesterday at the White House during the dinner. I think it's a very positive statement. I subscribe to it. I'm not ashamed at all to state that I believe in divine providence, and President Carter does believe in divine providence, and I think this is an element which brought us personally nearer.

**Q.** Since this is the last question, I wonder if I could ask you a two-part question. The first part, sir, is whether your plan for a Geneva Conference foresees advance negotiations, perhaps through the good offices of the United States, between the Israelis and the Arabs. The second question, sir, is: would you comment on the reports that we've just heard in Washington that the present leadership in the Arab world can be characterized as moderate, that there seems to be more of an inclination to accept the right of Israel to exist as one of their neighbours in the Middle East? Do you see the Arab leadership now as moderate, as ready to proceed in that direction?...

**A.** Now. We are for negotiations about the Geneva Conference, not about its merits. As I said, our approach is that the negotiations to conclude a peace treaty should be completely free from the point of view of the parties concerned. If I may quote a famous document in America, of "an externally devised formula for a settlement," are you aware of that document, Mr. Kalb?

**Kalb:** I'm waiting to hear the details from you.

**P.M. Begin:** You will get them from me. This sentence is written in the platform of the Democratic Party, which, as I suppose, won the election in the United States. Now, as far as the second part of your question is concerned: I'll tell you frankly, I would comment on your question and I would say what characterizes now the policy the Arab countries pursue, but as I want to create good will on all sides towards the Geneva Conference, I will not answer this part of the question. I will not comment whether they are moderate or not so. I have my conviction on it, but I suppose it is rather better, methodologically, to stand by the political truce.

Let us have respect for each other. Let us not blame any party. Let us have now that atmosphere of, I repeat, mutual respect which will bring us all to Geneva.

**21. Statement to the press following a meeting between Prime Minister Begin and Secretary General Waldheim and press conference with Mr. Begin at United Nations Headquarters, 22 July 1977.**

*After his meetings with President Carter in the White House, Prime Minister Begin held additional talks in New York. Following a meeting with U.N. Secretary General Waldheim, a statement was issued to the press. Mr. Begin also held a press conference in which he discussed the items raised in the talk with Dr. Waldheim, chief of them the situation in Lebanon. Text of the statement and the press conference follows:*

During their hour long conversation the Secretary General and the Prime Minister had an extensive exchange of views on various aspects of the situation in the Middle East.

Prime Minister Begin outlined to the Secretary General his ideas regarding the resumption of the Geneva Conference as far as procedure and working methods are concerned. The Prime Minister also explained to the Secretary General his position with regard to a future settlement of the Middle East problem.

The Secretary General referred to the position of the U.N. with regard to the Middle East and stressed the need for an early resumption of the negotiating process.

During the course of the discussion Prime Minister Begin expressed to the Secretary General his appreciation for the constructive work of the U.N. peace-keeping forces in the Middle East.

**Prime Minister Begin:**

I had a very serious talk with the Secretary General of the United Nations. The first topic I brought to him is the situation in Southern Lebanon. I brought to his knowledge this is the Litani River and this is our northern border, and the red color is a Muslim village or township, the blue color a Christian village or township, the green color a Druse village or township. Now everybody can see that the Christian villages are an island surrounded by a sea, by an ocean of Muslim villages and townships. They are completely outnumbered. Now in these areas there are 5,000 members of the so-called P.L.O., all of them armed with Soviet arms and Soviet artillery. And from all those Muslim villages there comes every night a barrage of artillery and mortar fire on this single Christian village and we help

them. Were it not for our help they would have been wiped out. Nobody else does help them. I drew the attention of the Secretary General to such a situation and I told him that we expect that the Christian world should do something to defend the outnumbered Christian minority threatened in its very existence. We will go on defending the Christian minority — we have been a minority for many ages — we are an overwhelming majority in our land but we are a small minority in the Middle East and therefore we will always extend a helping hand to them. What my appeal was to the Secretary General, and also through you to public opinion in this country and in all the other states, is that something should be done. That this outnumbered small group of people, some 50,000 Christians, men, women and children surrounded by a quarter of a million, 250,000 Muslims attacking them, trying to destroy them time and again — something should be done to help them — and to ensure that they live. They have a perfect right to live as a Christian minority in the Middle East and so they should be helped in their resistance to the attempts to destroy them.

Secondly, we had a discussion with the Secretary General about Geneva and he raised the problem of participation. I had the duty and also the honor to tell the Secretary General in connection with the decision by the nine European countries that perhaps more than any other people the Europeans should be very careful about proposals that may mean shedding of Jewish blood. I told him that the Rhine and the Danube are full of Jewish blood and there was a time, perhaps symbolically one may say so, in those rivers there was more Jewish blood than water, and whenever anyone makes a so-called proposal to have a Palestinian state then he should know that it will mean shedding of Jewish blood, blood of men, women and children, and therefore I also explained to him the complete falsification of historic facts in connection with the term "Palestine". We stand here and we are a group of Palestinians. Palestine is a name of a country and when at San Remo the Mandate was given to the British Government by the League of Nations it was stated as I quote — "Recognition having been given to the historical connection between the Jewish people and Palestine" — between the Jewish people and Palestine. This is the historic fact — there are Palestinian Jews and there are Palestinian Arabs, but to use the word Palestine against us — against the Jewish people, against our rights — is a complete distortion of the historic facts.

Thirdly, I brought before the Secretary General the question of the small group of Jews, the leftover of a great Jewish community in Syria. There are only 800 families in Syria — Jewish families which live in a ghetto — they live in fear and we all in our generation promised each other that fear will disappear. Every man has a right to live fearlessly. Now they live in a ghetto and they are humiliated and they want to get out and it is astonishing that President Assad until now keeps them hostages in Syria. I asked the Secretary General to take up this problem with Syria and to use any opportunity possible to talk to President Assad and ask him to let the few Jews left in Syria go. There are many countries which are ready now to give them refuge. Of course, we are ready to receive them at any time. We gave haven to the Vietnamese refugees and we think it was a natural act because we have never forgotten, as I said also in the presence of the President of the United States, that boat — those boats of Jews in the thirties which fled Nazi Germany, Nazi barbarism and tried to find a haven and they were refused by all the countries in the world. So now the act of giving refuge to the Vietnamese refugees, as I did when I became Prime Minister of Israel, was natural. But if we give refuge to Vietnamese, how can we acquiesce in the persecution of our brethren. Therefore I took it up with the Secretary General — let us hope



he will intercede in Damascus on this humanitarian problem and that the Jews in Syria will be allowed to go into freedom. Thank you ladies and gentlemen for your attention.

**Q.** Did you speak to the Secretary General about a U.N. force in southern Lebanon?

**A.** He asked me about that question and I answered him as I did in the discussion with the President of the U.S.

**Q.** What initiatives do you think Waldheim should take that he hasn't taken so far?

**A.** I didn't ask about any initiatives — the U.N. now — let me say a special situation from the parliamentary point of view and there was even a majority of the General Assembly of the United Nations which adopted the most abominable resolution ever adopted by any organization to the effect that Zionism is to be equated with racism. I protested very seriously to the Secretary General in connection with that resolution. We are the victims of racism. We lost a third of our people because of racism and to turn us — or try to turn us — into racists when our people received with such great hospitality the Vietnamese refugees — thousands of our people flocked into the township in which we brought the Vietnamese refugees and all the attitudes which we have — to try to turn us into racists is an abomination. It is to be deeply regretted that a majority was found in the General Assembly to adopt such a travesty of justice, of the truth — that resolution.

I didn't ask the Secretary General to undertake any initiatives — I know his difficult position with the majority in the General Assembly — while we have to take initiatives — we took initiatives to reconvene a session of the Geneva Conference to start talking about peace treaties between Israel and her Arab neighbors.

**Q.** We have had reports that Israel is supplying arms to Guatemala in the conflict between Guatemala and Belize...

**A.** Baseless information. I have asked about it — there is no basis for that information.

**Q.** Going back to Geneva Mr. Prime Minister — have you taken up or thought about the prospects of this conference meeting under the co-chairmanship of one of the members — one of the countries which has no diplomatic — I refer to the Soviet Union — and can this chairmanship operate on the basis of fairness without you having established those diplomatic relations?

**A.** It's a very good and fair question, but it should be put to Mr. Gromyko, not to me. It's the fact that there are two co-chairmen.

We want the Geneva Conference to be reconvened and therefore we ask for a letter of invitation by the two co-chairmen. It is very un-normal that we do not have diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union but as you know in my opening speech in Parliament — when I presented the Government to our Knesset — I, inter alia, inserted the passage in which I stated that we are interested in the normalization of our relations with the Soviet Union. It was the Soviet Union which severed diplomatic relations with Israel on the eve of the Six Day War — therefore it is up to the Soviet Union — incumbent on the Soviet Union to take the initiative and renew diplomatic relations with us. If they do take the initiative, we shall ask them to release the Prisoners of Zion who languish in their concentration camps, and to stop any persecution of Judaism and Zionism and any incitement which they do make against Judaism and Zionism, and let every Jew in the Soviet Union who wants to come as our brother to the historic homeland of the Jewish people.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, in our country (that is Spain), we do not have diplomatic relations. Could you tell us what is your view on that point?

**A.** We hope to have diplomatic relations with democratic Spain. We want such

diplomatic relations and as it is understood — that can be done only on the basis of reciprocity. So if Spain agrees, as Portugal did, to have diplomatic relations with Israel, we shall exchange ambassadors in Madrid and in Jerusalem.

**Q.** In view of your position on the West Bank and Gaza, the Arabs are saying that you are intending a South African type of Arab Bantustan — my first point. Secondly — will you welcome back the Arabs to the West Bank and Gaza. And finally, so as to reduce the burden of the back of UNRWA — will you accord citizenship to those Palestinians who have come back home and those who are already there in Gaza and the West Bank?

**A.** Very three short questions. Thank you sir. First of all, when you say Gaza everyone knows what it is. When you say the West Bank I must make clear that you mean Judea and Samaria — don't you? No, because this is a complete falsification of truth. What is the West Bank? Jordan — Jordan is a land, not a part of the land. It was occupied by Trans-Jordan — through invasion and through aggression. And the annexation by Trans-Jordan of Judea and Samaria has never been recognized except by Britain and by Pakistan. Britain is a democratic country. I wouldn't think that Pakistan is a symbol of democracy in our time. Just a minute — I didn't finish answering the three short questions, let's have some patience for the questioner. There are some 450,000 Arab refugees in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. I would like to inform you that neither Jordan nor Egypt did anything for 19 years to solve the humanitarian problem of those refugees. For the last ten years we gave the Arab refugees housing and permanent jobs. I invite you to come to the Gaza Strip and you will see the new houses which we built for the Arab refugees whereas the Egyptians let them live in horrible slums. And so the case was also of Judea and Samaria and therefore we are going to solve mainly the problem of the Arab refugees... because the Jewish people are a people of refugees and we do understand the bitter lot of the refugees. Now the Arab countries should solve the problems of the refugees living in their lands. Suppose I can say that the Arab countries have some money — usually it is called petro dollars and they have some land — they have 12 million square kilometers, 21 sovereign Arab states stretching from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. They have the water and they have the land. Long ago they could have humanely solved the problem of the Arab refugees — they didn't do so — they didn't want to do so. Whereas in Europe, with millions of refugees, the countries in which they live now resettled them, as those refugees from Germany or from the two Germanies or the refugees from the Sudeten — from Czechoslovakia, and nobody in the world shall ever ask Czechoslovakia to receive back one German refugee and the Soviet Union is of course enthusiastic about the fact that all those refugees live in Germany and not in Czechoslovakia and nobody has ever asked India to receive the Indian refugees who went to Pakistan or vice versa. It is resettlement. This is now the adopted pattern of solving the problem of refugees — the problem which we never wanted to create. In 1947, when we were attacked by the Arabs with the declared aim to destroy our independence, we called upon our Arab neighbors to stay in the country, not to flee — to build a country together but their leaders — the Arab leaders — called them to leave — to flee — and then they promised them to come victoriously to Tel-Aviv. They did not come victoriously to Tel Aviv and they never will. And therefore in this way, the problem of the Arab refugees was created, not by us but by the Arab aggression and invasion of our land from all three directions and by the call upon the Arab population to flee the country. It is a humanitarian problem. It should be solved in a humane way. We solve it — the Arab countries should solve it.

**22. Press conference with Prime Minister Begin upon his return from the U.S. 25 July 1977.**

*At an airport press conference, the Prime Minister declared that he has succeeded in establishing personal friendly relations with President Carter. He said that there was no Israel-America confrontation and then outlined again his peace plan as presented to the Carter administration. There was complete agreement between Israel and the U.S. that the final goal in the peacemaking process should be a peace treaty. Mr. Begin said that unlike the policy of the previous Rabin government, he had asked for direct Israel-Arab talks without prior Israel-U.S. coordination and agreement. To this the U.S. agreed.*

Ladies and gentlemen, the most important achievement of the visit to Washington was the creation of personal, and I will not hesitate to say — friendly and perhaps even profound contact between the U.S. President, Mr. Carter, and myself.

I had the privilege of being in close proximity for eight years with Ze'ev Jabotinsky, and so I am not easily impressed by people. I wish to say, upon my return home, that I was profoundly impressed by the extraordinary personality of President Carter.

First of all, and on the basis of what I have learned in *Pirkei Avot* (the ethics of the fathers) he has what is the most important attribute of a human being — a good heart. He possesses inestimable intelligence, a capacity for grasping the essential in the shortest possible time, and a great talent for making decisions.

I am certain that Mr. Carter will be a great president of the United States and will be a boon to humanity as a whole, because by the laws of the reality of our times the President of the United States is also both the leader and the defender of the free world. Therefore I am convinced that near at hand, during President Carter's term of office, is a great and important period of the history of the entire free world, a period that will be rich in accomplishment and consolidation and we shall maintain personal contact in all ways at our disposal, and the ways in our day are many. Last night we transmitted from the plane a message to the U.S. President containing an expression of thanks for the wonderful hospitality he accorded my wife, my colleagues and myself, and the message, as I was informed by the captain, was transmitted direct to the White House.

The second achievement of the visit was that for the first time since the Six Day War it was stated, with the concurrence of the U.S. government and the Israeli government, that the object of any negotiations between us and the Arab states is a peace treaty.

I recall, ten years ago — I was in Washington in the capacity of a member of the Government and I had to work hard to explain to representatives of the administration there what we were insisting on was a peace treaty, and that it was a just demand. This time there is complete agreement: The negotiations, whether in Geneva or conducted in other ways, shall have a peace treaty as their goal.

When you say peace treaty, you have in effect said everything and you do not have to deal with what is called here the "nature of peace". But even while I was still in America I read about certain strange demands by the present-day opposition. And therefore, in view of these demands, I wish to read to you the contents of the document that was handed to the U.S. Administration. (Here the Prime Minister quoted one paragraph from the document which he presented to President Carter. The paragraph says specifically that "only diplomatic relations with the Arab states" come into account.)

(The Prime Minister went on to explain how it happened that in the copy of the document that was leaked by members of the Knesset Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee the words "diplomatic relations" were accidentally left out).

I repeat when you say a "peace treaty" you do not have to go into detail. Because every peace treaty contains the following elements:

1. Conclusion of the state of war. This is the first provision of any peace treaty.
2. The second section is called "territories", and it is here that you lay down the borders.
3. The third section provides for the exchange of ambassador's and diplomatic relations.
4. The fourth section provides for economic relations.

We have specified these four main principles merely so as to eliminate the possibility of any doubt, but actually, as I say, we need not have specified anything, because in saying "peace treaty" we have said it all.

There was an additional achievement on this visit, but as you know, we respect the Knesset, and therefore, we will put off presenting the details of the other achievements until the debate in the Knesset which will take place, as I have requested, this Wednesday.

Before that I will pay a visit to the President, who will be the first person in Israel to hear a full and detailed report of the visit and its outcome. At 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday the Cabinet will convene to receive a full report and at 11:00 I will open the political debate in the Knesset. I will speak about the visit and will hear the honorable constructive opposition and after the debate there will also be a reply. With this I conclude my partial report, out of respect for the President, the Knesset and the Government. Ladies and gentlemen, your questions.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, when you speak of criticism, there was one other piece of criticism on substantial matters relating to your contacts with the U.S. President. The criticism says that you reject a political struggle with the United States and so this struggle will find expression at the Geneva conference. Whereupon we will find ourselves isolated, because the United States has not changed its position on the matter of the borders nor on the matter of the Palestinians.

**A.** The truth of the matter is just the opposite. The previous government got the State of Israel into an extremely serious conflict with the United States. I have read the contents of the conversation between the President and the former Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin.

This document is classified and so I will not divulge its contents. I can say only, and I am certain that Mr. Rabin will attest that it is so — that the two talks he had with the President were extremely acerbic, and our country came into conflict with the United States. The present government has done away with the conflict that the previous government created. That is the fact of the matter.

As for the triangle consisting of the U.S., the Arabs and ourselves, we adopted a new political strategy. The previous government committed a grave political error: it sought an agreement with the United States before going to Geneva. Let us assume that the declared policy of the previous government was the Allon Plan. Had the previous government been able to say that the United States agreed to the Allon Plan then at least there would have been a certain logic as far as it was concerned in seeking an agreement with the United States over the Allon Plan and then, with that agreement in hand, to go to Geneva. Now, the government knew that there was no consent to the Allon Plan on the part of the United States. And in fact there was total opposition to it in Washington. Yet, all the same, it went to the United States to seek a mutual U.S.-Israeli agreement before going to Geneva. In

other words, it invited U.S. pressure, because in the United States they said to the government, if you want an agreement with us then you must accept our opinion, and our opinion is not the Allon Plan. But, as the U.S. leaders said at the time, an Israeli withdrawal to the lines of June 4, 1967 with slight alterations. Therefore, as I say, the previous government committed a twofold error:

1. It got the State into a severe conflict with the President of the United States and with the United States in general.

2. It sought an agreement with the United States and invited American pressure knowing full well that the gap between its position regarding the territorial problem and that of the United States was very wide.

We have corrected these two mistakes. First there is no conflict. There are also arms, and there is friendship and understanding and a very important promise on the part of the U.S. President, namely we have differences of opinion (and somebody here got smart and said "the day will yet come when the differences between us and the United States will come to light.") Why wait for the future? The President and I said openly in the ears of America and Israel, that we do have differences. But the two of us, the President and I, also stated the differences that exist, and which also may arise in the future — will never result in a breach between the United States and Israel.

We have an explicit announcement like this by the President of the United States. In other words, whether there are or aren't differences, we will discuss and argue about them as free men and no breach will result.

We did not request any agreement with the United States prior to Geneva. Had we done so, we would have been inviting pressure. What we said to the President and his assistants was this: We are prepared to go to the Geneva Conference as of October 10th, that is, after Yom Kippur and the Sukkot Festival.

Everyone must go to Geneva without any preconditions. All the proposals will be brought to the peace conference bargaining table.

We will debate with the Arabs. They will bring their proposals and we will bring ours, without any preconditions. We will not demand of them and they will not receive from us any prior commitment. We will not demand it of them and they will not demand or require it of us; a completely free negotiation, free of preconditions and prior commitments and also of formulas for a solution from outside. As was stated explicitly in the platform of the U.S. Democratic Party. In other words, this is a principle that America accepts.

Under these conditions there is no pressure and there is agreement between Israel and the U.S. that the object is a peace treaty.

So it is that we have adopted a completely different political strategy and have thereby bettered the situation of the people of Israel and the State of Israel.

**Q.** What will be the government's position in the near future in the matter of settlement in Judea and Samaria and other parts of the country?

**A.** I was asked this question yesterday in New York, and I would like to repeat the answer I gave there. It was given in the form of a rhetorical question. Before we went to meet the President we conducted a geographical search and found that in the United States of America there are 11 places named Hebron, five places named Shiloh, four places named Bethel and six places named Bethlehem, and I gave the following strange example: Let's imagine that the governors of the states in which the Bethlehems and Hebrons and Shilos and Bethels are located issue a proclamation saying any citizen of the United States can come and settle there, but one category of citizens is forbidden to settle there and that

is the Jewish citizens of the United States. To them it is forbidden to build a home in Shiloh, in Hebron, in Bethlehem of the United States of America. Would you all not scream and shout about racial discrimination — for why should a Jewish citizen of the United States be discriminated against in this respect?

I asked millions of American viewers if it is possible to expect a Jewish Prime Minister and a Jewish Government to forbid Jews to buy land or to build their homes in the original Shiloh, the original Bethel, the original Bethlehem and the original Hebron, and I ended with a question mark, to say that the question is a rhetorical one. In Tel Aviv too I will end with this question, and all other matters are under the authority of the government which will take its decisions.

**Q.** In your talks with President Carter did you raise the question of the sale of Kfir aircraft to various countries, including Ecuador?

**A.** No. The question was not raised, but as you know, the day before my departure for the United States, the President ordered that there be placed at our disposal a number of very important items. Worth a total of a quarter of a billion dollars. I myself think that the most important item of all is a unit of helicopters known as Cobras and designed for attacking tanks, for national defence against an assault by tanks.

I informed the President of the quantities of tanks in the hand of the states surrounding us — Jordan, Syria and Egypt — 5.500 tanks, or 7.500 tanks if you add those of Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and 10.300 tanks — if you add all the Arab states, and that is something we must do, especially after the experience of the Yom Kippur War.

Here you are hearing numbers — five thousand or seven thousand. But there is no cause for alarm. We too have a very specific number of tanks, and above all, our tank crews, and we have not said anything at all about any panic, but it is clear that ten thousand tanks is a serious force.

It is incidentally four times the number of tanks that Nazi Germany in operation Barbarossa, put into action against the Soviet Union along a border thousands of kilometers long. The Arabs today have four times the number of tanks that attacked Soviet Russia.

So it is that we spoke of the need to provide the people of Israel with a means of national defence and deterrent: among other things the President approved the matter of the Cobra and 12 helicopters for the time being and we have reason to believe that more will follow. This is a weapon of very serious significance because it is capable of piercing armour and it dominates the theater of battle, and it is good that the Arab states should know that we want to deter and not to go to war but to prevent it. There are other items. But the subject of Ecuador was not raised at all.

### **23. Government statement on recognition of three settlements, 26 July 1977.**

*The Likud election platform declared that the entire historic Land of Israel is the inalienable heritage of the Jewish people, and that no part of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) should be handed over to foreign rule. Shortly after the elections to the Ninth Knesset, Mr. Begin visited Alon Moreh in Samaria and declared his support for additional settlements in that area. While in the U.S., the Prime Minister reiterated his view that Jews have the right to settle and live in every part of the country. Following Mr. Begin's return*

*from the U.S., the Ministerial Committee on Settlements, conferred legal status on three settlements in the West Bank established during the previous government's term of office.*

The joint Government-World Zionist Organization Settlement Affairs Committee today decided to recognize Ma'aleh Adumim, Ofra and Elon Moreh as full-fledged settlements, and charged the settlement institutions with granting them commensurate treatment.

**24. U.S. reaction to Israeli settlements announcement, statement by State Department Spokesman, 26 July 1977.**

*While the State Department spokesman issued the following statement, Secretary of State Vance said to the press: "We are deeply disappointed, we have consistently stated and reiterated during the Prime Minister's visit here that such settlements are contrary to international law and are an obstacle to the peace making process."*

We have been in touch with the Israel Government about the report regarding the settlements. It has informed us that it is taking action to give legal status to the existing settlements on the West Bank. It is our understanding that the former government has refused to legalize at least one of these settlements. We have consistently made clear, including in our recent talks in Washington, our view that the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories is not only contrary to the Fourth Geneva Convention, but also constitutes an obstacle to progress in the peace making process. We are deeply disappointed in this development.

**25. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin on his visit to the U.S. 27 July 1977.**

*A detailed report by the Prime Minister to the Knesset opened an eight hour political debate. Mr. Begin outlined the main issues discussed in Washington and stated again his opposition to interim agreements. His government would strive to reach full fledged peace treaties, through the mechanism of the Geneva Peace Conference. The Prime Minister stated that while Israel is totally opposed to any PLO participation in Geneva, it would not oppose the participation of Palestinian Arabs in the framework of the Jordanian delegation. Mr. Begin also revealed that the cabinet, on 27 July 1977, empowered the Ministerial Committee on Settlements to decide upon the establishment of new settlements.*

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Knesset,

The following are the issues which were raised in the talks in Washington: The situation in southern Lebanon, the Geneva Conference and its composition, the goal of the negotiations between Israel and its neighbours, the question of the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael, Jewish settlement, Syrian Jewry, Soviet Jewry.

Concerning the situation in southern Lebanon we informed the President that: (A) we do not want any territory of Lebanon, (B) we do not want any war to break out in the wake of events in Lebanon, (C) we shall not leave the Christian minority in Lebanon in the lurch.

We explained that we had been a minority for many generations, and we had always been on the brink of the threat of annihilation. We explained further that, while we are a large majority in our own country, we are a small minority in the Middle East, and we therefore cannot acquiesce in an attempt to annihilate, wipe out and destroy a minority. This time it is a Christian minority which is involved: It has no less a right to exist than the Moslem majority. With the aid of a map we showed that the Christian villages in southern Lebanon are like a small island surrounded by dozens of Moslem villages, that there are today 5,000 terrorists in southern Lebanon, and they shell the Christian villages night after night. The State of Israel continues to extend help to the Christian villages. I can say that, without our help, the Christian minority in Lebanon — and particularly in southern Lebanon — would be annihilated. We shall continue to defend the Christian minority in Lebanon and we shall not allow its enemies to bring about its destruction.

As to the Geneva Conference and its composition: we proposed that a new session of the Geneva Conference be convened commencing on 10 October this year, that is, after the Jewish Holy Days.

*According to the precedent set four years ago, this session should be convened by the two chairmen, that is, by the United States and the Soviet Union, in accordance with Paragraph 3 of Resolution 338 of the Security Council — which states: "the Security Council decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under the appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East."*

We have noted that Resolution 338 includes and mentions Resolution 242 of the Security Council, of 22 November 1967. We also proposed that accredited delegations of sovereign states participate in the new session of the Geneva Conference. We specified: Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

The countries participating in the Geneva Conference will present no prior conditions in connection with their participation in the conference. At the public session of the reconvened Geneva Conference, the representatives of the participating countries will make opening declarations. Following the public session, mixed commissions will be established, that is: Egyptian-Israeli, Syrian-Israeli, Jordanian-Israeli.

Within the framework of these mixed commissions, negotiations will be conducted on the signature of peace treaties between Israel and its neighbours. The chairmanship of the commissions will rotate between the Israel representative and the representative of the neighbouring country. After the contents of the peace treaties are agreed upon — that is: termination of the state of war, demarcation of borders, diplomatic relations, economic relations, etc., the Geneva Conference will be convened for an additional public session, at which the peace treaties will be signed.

These were our proposals concerning the composition of the Geneva Conference, which we put to the President and his advisers.

We were asked: Would we agree to have Lebanon participate in the Geneva Conference? We replied: Yes.

Concerning the composition of the Geneva Conference, we were asked — though we had been explicit about the matter in our proposals — what our stand would be as to the



participation of the organization called P.L.O. We stated that its participation was totally unacceptable.

We were also asked: Would we agree to have Arabs of Eretz Yisrael participate in the Jordanian delegation? We replied: Yes, provided they are not representatives of the organization I have mentioned.

I should like to clarify this attitude, so that it should be clear to the house, to the nation at home, to the Jewish people and to public opinion everywhere. The organization called the P.L.O. is an organization of murderers, which aspires to destroy the State of Israel. Since the days of the Nazis, the Jewish people has not had a more brutal and bloodthirsty enemy. We have nothing to negotiate about with it. We shall not conduct any talks about our destruction. Even the *modus operandi* of that organization is Nazi. It plans in advance the murder of men, women and children, and when they carry out their designs, they exult over their success in killing Jewish men, women and children. Their desire is to destroy the State of Israel according to article 19 of the document called the "Palestinian Covenant", which says that the establishment of the State of Israel is null and void.

Another article of the Covenant states that the Jews living in this country shall be recognized as "Palestinians", but only those who were in the country or were born there before the beginning of the "Zionist Invasion". The clear meaning of this article is that only 50-60,000 Jews who lived in the country before the promulgation of the Balfour Declaration shall be recognized as "Palestinians", and the rest have nothing more to do in this country. In other words, 2,950,000 Jews, according to their designs, will have to leave Eretz Yisrael.

It is self-evident that all these aspirations have no basis in reality. That murderers' organization will not destroy the State of Israel, will not bring about the expulsion of the Jews from this country, and all its efforts will be in vain. But what counts for us is the aspiration and the policy, and these are Nazi in every sense of the term. For these reasons we are not prepared to conduct any negotiations whatsoever with representatives of the organization known as the P.L.O. We have made this attitude clear, without leaving any shadow of doubt, to the President and his advisers. This is the attitude of the Government of Israel.

It should also be noticed that in the agreement between the United States and the State of Israel in connection with the Geneva Conference, it was stipulated that any change in its composition shall require the consent of all the participants. This is the right that was accorded us: To object to any change—in other words, a change can take place only with our consent. We agreed that Lebanon shall participate in the Geneva Conference, and we do not give our consent that the organization called the P.L.O. shall take part in it. This right was given to be used. We are on firm ground, both of precedent — namely, the Geneva Conference as it was composed when it was convened four years ago — and also according to an express commitment by the United States in a joint American-Israeli document, under which each party — that is, including Israel — is entitled to oppose any change whatsoever in the composition of the Conference. We shall not, therefore, under any circumstances agree to the participation of the organization called the P.L.O. in the Geneva Conference.

What is the goal of the negotiations between Israel and its neighbours? I can inform the Knesset that, for the first time since the Six-Day War it has been agreed by both governments, the Government of the United States and the Government of Israel, that the goal of

the negotiations at Geneva, or of any negotiations between ourselves and our neighbours, is peace treaties.

If we say "peace treaties", Mr. Speaker, there is actually no need to go into detail. Peace treaties were signed after World War I at Trianon, Sevres, Lausanne and St. Germaine. Peace treaties were signed after World War II in Paris, in 1946, between the Allies and Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and Italy. A peace treaty was signed after World War II between the U.S. and Japan.

Anyone who reads these peace treaties is aware that, in keeping with international law, the first article in them states: "The state of war is concluded." The second chapter is territorial.

In the peace treaties, the boundaries are laid down, the permanent boundaries between the states that were previously at war. There is a chapter about diplomatic relations and the exchange of ambassadors. There is a chapter in the peace treaties about economic relations, and so forth. In a word, when you have said "peace treaty" you have said everything about the nature of the peace and there is no more need to argue about this question, because everything is said in the term "peace treaties".

I am happy to note that the U.S. Government has agreed that the goal of the negotiations shall be the signature of peace treaties. Nevertheless, in order to ensure that there should be no doubt as to the question of how we interpret peace, permanent peace, true peace between ourselves and our neighbours, we have not only proposed peace treaties but also specified their contents.

One member of the Knesset has expressed concern that, when this was published, we did not include diplomatic relations among the details. There was no reason for this concern. It was true that there was an error in dictation, and perhaps it was my error, but in the morning, before the meeting with the President and his advisers, I re-read the document and found that the words "diplomatic relations" did not appear. We recopied the second page of the document and, of course, introduced the term "diplomatic relations". In this form the document was submitted to the representatives of the American administration.

There is a question that exists in reality: Whether the Arab states will insist on the participation of the organization called the P.L.O. in the Geneva Conference. We have clarified our position without leaving any room for doubt. We were informed that Egypt and Syria insist that this organization of murderers shall participate in the new session of the Geneva Conference. We therefore had to consider what the alternative will be in case these Arab states insist on the participation of the P.L.O. in the Geneva Conference. If they display intransigence on this matter, if they insist on the demand for the participation of the P.L.O. in the Geneva Conference, they will make the convening of the new session of the Conference impossible.

What, then, is the alternative? We have proposed to the U.S. Government two alternative possibilities. The one is: We agree that the U.S. Government should use its good offices in all the capitals concerned — namely, Jerusalem, Cairo, Amman and Damascus (if we also add Lebanon, in Beirut) — in order to set up the mixed commissions, three or four as I have mentioned, and these commissions shall conduct the negotiations on peace treaties.

The second possibility is the holding of proximity talks as proposed to us by the U.S. Government in 1972. We agree that the U.S. should provide its good offices in order to hold these talks. And again, in the framework of these talks, negotiations shall be conducted on peace treaties, in the framework of mixed commissions. We think this is a practical

method both for the convening of a special session of the Geneva Conference and also for the acceptance of an alternative method.

Mixed commissions are no novelty. They existed at Rhodes in 1949 and they brought about the signature of agreement of great international significance, the Armistice Agreements. In these agreements, it was laid down, *inter alia*, that they were direct steps towards the establishment of permanent peace in Palestine. That was expressly stated.

In another article of the Armistice Agreements it was stated that the demarcation lines were not on any account to be interpreted as territorial or political borders, and that agreement on them was not to be regarded as establishing a position in regard to the rights and demands of each party in connection with the final solution of the Palestine question.

On the basis of that precedent — unfortunately, 29 years late — we are proposing to establish permanent peace as the parties undertook in 1949. Since then there has been incessant bloodshed. We regret this. The Arab states did not fulfil the other conditions in the Armistice Agreements. One paragraph forbids attacks on the civilian population, not only by an army but also by irregular forces throughout the years. In the course of 19 years — up to the six-day war — 1,500 Israeli citizens were murdered, and thousands more were wounded and maimed. And there were four wars, every one of them the result of Arab aggression and the unwillingness of the Arab states to conclude that peace which was promised in the Armistice Agreements.

But these facts belong to the past: there has been a long delay, a delay tragic to all the nations of the Middle East. But there comes a moment when we must begin establishing permanent peace in the Middle East. And therefore this method of setting up bilateral mixed commissions, between Israel on the one hand and each of its neighbours on the other, is the practical way to bring about the signature of peace treaties.

The questions of the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael — The “Palestine question” — was put to us. From the first we objected to that term. “Palestine” is the name of a land, the Land of Israel. When the British Mandate was approved at San Remo, it stated: “Recognition having been given to the connection between the Jewish people and Palestine...”

When Woodrow Wilson — who gave the world the term “national self-determination” — appointed, after World War I, a commission for Middle East affairs, it submitted a recommendation which stated: “It is just that Palestine shall become a Jewish state”.

When the late Dr. Haim Weizmann made an agreement with King Feisal, the agreement asserted basically that there should be relations of friendship and understanding between “the Arab state” and “Palestine”. “Arab state” means the Arab people, and “Palestine” means the Land of Israel for the Jewish people.

When Herbert Samuel was the first British High Commissioner in Eretz Yisrael he came up with an interesting usage: In English “Palestine”, in Arabic “Falastin”, and in Hebrew “Palestina” — and everyone knows they meant Eretz Yisrael.

On the basis of these and other documents, it is clear that “Palestine” means Eretz Yisrael, the land promised to the Jewish people.

And therefore anyone stating “Palestine question” and referring to the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael is both distorting the historical facts and being unfaithful to historical truth. From the beginning we objected to the very term “Palestine question”. The talks focused on this question but the terms were different, including the “Palestinian entity”. We explained that any such proposal would inevitably bring about the establishment of a “Palestinian” state, inevitably — whatever the practical proposals accompanying this idea. A “Palestinian” state, such as, let us say, Egyptian President Sadat proposes — in Judea, Samaria and the

Gaza Strip, linked by an extraterritorial corridor (that is, one under Arab sovereignty) between Judea and Samaria, and the Gaza Strip in the south — such a state would be a threat to the very existence of the Jewish state.

We have no need for quotations to know what is the desire of that organization empowered by the Rabat Conference to represent, as was stated, all the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael. There will be perpetual bloodshed. This is no theory. A different but similar situation existed for 19 years, and there was perpetual bloodshed. We were attacked in Jerusalem, at Shafirir near Tel Aviv, in Ashkelon, Ashdod, in the north, the east, the south, week after week, if not day after day.

It is typical that the President of Egypt, in presenting his demand, does not promise a peace treaty or peace, but what is termed “non-belligerency”, a concept without any standing in international law. In other words: Not peace. And we must assert that should such a situation be created, the Middle East will lose the prospect — every possibility — of peace. For then, as we demonstrated to the President and his advisers, the Arabs would glance at the map and ask themselves: Why should we make peace with the State of Israel? Their guns would be nine miles from the coast in the vicinity of Netanya, ten miles from Kalkilya, 20 miles in the vicinity of Tel Aviv, ten miles from Beersheba, etc.

Soviet artillery in our day has a range of 43.8 kilometres. There is no doubt that, should such a Palestinian state be established, it would not be long before it began receiving all the modern and sophisticated arms from the Soviet Union. Flight time from Odessa to Bethlehem is less than two hours. Following its invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Soviet Union discovered deficiencies in its logistic dispositions: It has since corrected them, and was capable of airlifting to Angola and Mozambique — thousands of kilometres south of the U.S.S.R. — tanks, artillery, missiles and all the aggressive military hardware of our time. This certainly holds true for Eretz Yisrael. Then a Soviet base would be established within the Palestinian state. It is no coincidence that, in a conference convened some weeks ago in Moscow under the chairmanship of Leonid Brezhnev, both Castro and Arafat participated: simultaneously.

That would be the reality: A threat of incomparable gravity to every citizen of Israel, to every man and woman in the State of Israel. And also a threat, of course, to the free world. We are aware of what is happening in the Middle East, from Ethiopia to Libya. Do we also need a Soviet base in the heart of the Middle East, from which they can expand southward, eastward and northward? The answer is self-evident.

We have made clear our stand on this matter again, so as not to leave a shadow of doubt. We utterly reject the establishment of a “Palestinian” state in any form whatsoever. And any proposal commencing with what is called a “Palestinian entity” will certainly end in the establishment of such a state. We say “no” — an absolute no, a clear no — to that notion in all its forms.

There are those who say that if we say “no” to a Palestinian state, we are in fact taking a negative stand. That is not true. There are rules of grammar by which “no” is stated, but an absolute positive is meant. “Thou shalt not kill” — “not”: an absolute positive. “Thou shalt not steal” — “not” is written: A grammatical negative, but a statement of positive rules. And the same applies to our stand vis-a-vis what is termed “the Palestinian state”. Grammatically, it is true, we say “no”, but, from the point of view of content this is the positive: In the first place as regards the prospect for peace and the prevention of bloodshed, the peril in store in such a case for every man, woman and child in Israel.

The problem of settlement, Jewish settlement, has been raised. True, we were requested

not to establish settlements. But we explained our position with absolute clarity, namely: There are in the United States of America places called "Hebron", "Shilo", "Bethel", "Bethlehem" and the like. These names manifest the profound connection of the American people with the Bible. Let us imagine that the governors of the states in which these places are situated were to decide and proclaim that all citizens of America could come to these places with the exception of one category of American citizens — the Jewish citizens. There would be an outcry all over the United States — and justly — over this discrimination against Jews. It would be a definitely racist discrimination.

Therefore we ask: Is it conceivable that a Jewish government shall prevent a Jew in this country, in Eretz Yisrael, acquiring land or building his home in the original Bethlehem, in Hebron or Shilo? In other words, we insisted on the inalienable right of Jews to live in Eretz Yisrael. There is no reason why Jews and Arabs should live in Jaffa and Haifa, in Ramla and Lod, in Acre and Nazareth and other places, and should not live together, in peace and mutual respect, in Judea and Samaria, in Gaza and Rafah. There is no justification for it, and this is the position of the Government.

Against the background of the decision adopted yesterday by the Cabinet Settlement Committee, recognizing the settlements of Elon Moreh, Ophra and Maaleh Adumim, I wish to state the position of the Government in connection with the statement of the Secretary of State. He said yesterday that the establishment of the settlements is contrary to international law. With all due respect, I would say to the Secretary of State that there is no basis for this charge. The State of Israel upholds international law, but if anyone relies upon the Geneva Convention of 1949, which is designed to protect the civilian population in occupied areas, I must say, first of all, that Jewish settlement does not in any way of under any circumstances do harm to the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael. We have not dispossessed, and will not dispossess, any Arab from his land.

The decision adopted yesterday applies to three existing settlements. No Arab land has been expropriated in the establishment of these settlements. They are existing settlements. It is true that the previous government had doubt about one settlement, Elon Moreh, and from time to time there were statements that it might not be able to remain on the land. But the attitude of this government on this matter is different from that of the previous government. We think that Jews have an absolute right to be in Elon Moreh. We never had any doubt, therefore, that on the establishment of the new government we would recognize these three settlements as settlements in all respects, and no injustice will be done thereby to any Arab family. We shall behave in the same way in the future. Jewish settlements will not involve any injustice, or the dispossession of any Arab residents, in any place in Eretz Yisrael.

As for international law, Israeli rule in Eretz Yisrael is not an occupation regime. The Knesset decided this in 1967. In that year the Knesset adopted a law which said: "The government is authorized by order to apply the jurisdiction, law and administration of the State to any area of Eretz Yisrael as shall be specified by order." This is the law. This is our law. This is the law adopted by the House of Representatives of the sovereign State of Israel. The Knesset legally authorized the government by law, according to its authority — even without the need for any further application to the Knesset, but by administrative order — to extend the jurisdiction, law and administration of the State to any area of Eretz Yisrael. In other words, we, by that law, proclaimed to all the nations that no part of Eretz Yisrael constitutes occupied territory, if the Knesset, legally, authorized the government to

extend to any part of the area of Eretz Yisrael the jurisdiction, law and administration of the State.

The Minister of Defence, accordingly, under the authority vested in him, extended Israeli law to certain areas in Eretz Yisrael where it was not clear whether our law applied to them. He did so by administrative order — not even that of the government as a whole, but of the Defence Minister alone. There is no novelty in this land and no contradiction. In a period of transition, existing laws may remain in force, but the law of the Knesset determines that there is no area in Eretz Yisrael which is an area of occupation, because the government is entitled to extend to any area of Eretz Yisrael the jurisdiction, law and administration of the State.

I now wish to reply to the argument about international law. When is a state which has occupied the territory of another state regarded as an occupying power? When it is clear that the state from whose territory a certain area was severed as a result of war exercised sovereignty over that area. The question is whether the Hashemite Government of Jordan was sovereign, or its sovereignty was recognized, over Judea and Samaria. To that question the answer is in the negative, beyond all doubt. Firstly, Jordan invaded Western Palestine in violation of international law. This was aggression. It invaded Western Palestine, shed blood, destroyed synagogues, and tried, together with the Egyptians and the Syrians, to destroy the independence of Israel, which had been proclaimed the day before the invasion, in violation of the international law. An act of undoubted aggression, an act of invasion, was committed. Does such act beget a right? There is a great rule of international law: "*Ex injuria jus non oritur*", an act of injustice does not produce any right.

Furthermore, no country, with two exceptions, recognized the illegal act of annexation committed by King Abdullah in the early '50s. The only countries that recognized this annexation were Britain — in those days Glubb Pasha was still in Amman — and secondly, that symbol of democracy, Pakistan. The United States of America never recognized the annexation, and neither did any other country, including the Arab states.

And now we can sum up that Jordan, which invaded, attacked and occupied, had no sovereignty, no recognized sovereignty, and therefore it is incorrect to say that Israeli rule in Judea and Samaria has the nature of an occupying power.

(In reply to an interjection by Zaidan Attashi — D.M.C.: Eretz Yisrael, by right, belongs to the Jewish people. The Arabs have an absolute right to live with us in Eretz Yisrael. I refer to Arab residents of Eretz Yisrael who have not acquired citizenship, but as residents are entitled to absolute equality of rights with Jewish residents in Eretz Yisrael. Today there are almost 100,000 Jewish residents who are not citizens and who do not vote for the Knesset but only for local authorities. We want exactly the same provision to apply to Arab residents, so long as they have not acquired citizenship. They have all the rights, as a nationality, to teach their children their language, religion and tradition, and they have all the individual rights of human beings and as residents, exactly like the Jewish residents. I am prepared, when the time comes, to propose that Arab residents shall have free choice of citizenship. We shall not impose our citizenship on them. If any of them applies for Israeli citizenship, I shall propose, when the time comes, to grant them such citizenship.)

I should like, on behalf of the Government of Israel, to express deep regret and profound disappointment over the statement of the Secretary of State. It was not justified. In our talks we left no doubt as to our position in principle in regard to settlement in Eretz Yisrael. Nor do we wish to leave any doubt today. That is why I said what I did.

True, in regard to settlement there are differences of opinion between the Government

of the United States and the Government of Israel. They did not arise yesterday. These differences of opinion have existed ever since the Six-Day War. From time to time, the United States Government has expressed reservations — sometimes in public — over some settlement at some place in Eretz Yisrael. These differences of opinion exist, but the United States and Israel have friendly relations. On this matter we have differences. We also have differences on other matters. We shall note this with total frankness, and we noted it in Washington too. This the President did from the moment I stepped on to the White House lawn, and this I did as well on that same White House lawn.

When we summed up, too, we said to one another that we have differences of opinion, but, be they what they may, they will not overshadow the deep friendship between the United States and Israel. Nor will they cast a shadow over the commitment of the United States towards Israel. How did the joint communique put it? — “Its security and well-being.” I draw the attention of the House to this dual expression. For many years Washington stated that America had a commitment to “the security and the survival” of Israel. We asked them not to employ the term “survival”. First of all because we believe it to be fundamentally negative. It has a certain ring, particularly in this generation, for one who has remained alive. Secondly, we are ready to declare that the Jewish people and its elected representatives are responsible for the continued existence of the State of Israel: No one else. We are responsible. Therefore we requested that the word “survival” be replaced by the term “wellbeing”.

Differences of opinion need not overshadow those words. I trust that they will not.

The Cabinet today discussed the question of settlement, and I should like to inform the Knesset of the resolution adopted this morning by Government of Israel:

*“The Cabinet again empowers the Ministerial Settlement Committee to decide upon the establishment of new settlements. The Ministerial Committee’s decision shall be on behalf of the Cabinet, and its decision shall have the force of a decision of the Cabinet in session.”*

We raised the question of our brethren in Syria, and requested action to save them and remove them from that ghetto in which they live today in Syria. In all, four thousand persons, about eight hundred families, remain in Syria. They dwell in a ghetto, in fear, and we shall not rest until all our brethren in Syria reach a safe haven and enjoy a life of freedom.

We raised in all its scope the question of Soviet Jewry. A mighty vision has arisen there. A mighty spectacle has appeared there. For nearly two generations the Jews in the Soviet Union were cut off from their people and their country. The Jew of the Soviet Union did not know the meaning of the Bible, did not know Hebrew, did not know Eretz Yisrael, or what their link was to the Jewish people. And there was a mighty awakening. And Jewish youth in the Soviet Union returned unto us, returned in faith and love, and are ready for martyrdom, to be sent to concentration camps and prison. They are ready for hunger and persecution: For the right to come unto — as they themselves say - the historic homeland of the Jewish people. The Jewish people will not rest, it will conduct a relentless public struggle, until the day comes — and we believe it will come — that every Jew who wants to return home, to Eretz Yisrael, will be afforded the opportunity, without persecution, of doing so.

In addition to the talks in Washington with the President and his advisers, in the meeting-room of the American Administration, we also held meetings with the Secretary of

State and with Senators and Congressmen. I met with the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Mr. Brown. With the agreement of the President, Mr. Carter, I informed Mr. Brown of the urgent problems of Israel's national defence. The following day the Secretary of State informed our Ambassador Mr. Simcha Dinitz — an ambassador of many deeds and great achievements — of the President's decision to supply us with arms: Hydrofoil boats, the amount required for the development of the "Merkava" tank, and a quantity of helicopters for anti-tank defence. The value of these supplies is about 250 million dollars. Afterwards, the United States Government Spokesman issued a statement to this effect in public confirmation. I trust that the discussions on additional supplies will continue between our Defence Minister and his American colleague when our Defence Minister visits the United States shortly. I trust that these discussions will have a successful outcome.

I met with the American Secretary of the Treasury. I informed him of our country's economic problems. I told him explicitly that our people want to live by their own labour, and are striving for the day when we shall not be dependent upon outside financial aid. But admittedly, we shall require such aid in the forthcoming period, because we are devoting immense sums — unexampled either in America or in Europe — to the needs of our national defence. He agreed. We decided that our Finance Minister, on his visit to the United States in September, would hold discussions with him on financial aid to the State of Israel. And, again, I trust that these discussions will have a successful outcome. I met with seventy senators. Of all these seventy senators, one is of Arab origin. One of them asked me: Shouldn't the organization called P.L.O. in fact be compared with the "Irgun Zva'i Leumi"? I need not expatiate on the answer I gave him in the presence of his colleagues. And I have reason to believe that, of the 40 senators present, 39 were satisfied by my answer. Of course, that Senator is an American Senator, and we respect him as a member of that famous institution of the United States. But the question had a hostile ring. I think that this matter should also be made clear to American public opinion, and I clarified it publicly: On radio, on television and in the press. That is to say: Any comparison between the organization called "P.L.O." and a Jewish fighting organization is tantamount to sacrilege.

I met with over 200 Congressmen, and the discussions were good — I can say that they were all based on an awareness of the intensification of the friendship between ourselves and the United States.

I also held important meetings with the former Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger, with Mr. David Rockefeller, Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, and other distinguished persons, and I also paid a call on the U.N. Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim. In my talk with Mr. Waldheim I requested him to work in the U.N. to guarantee the wellbeing of the members of the Christian minority in southern Lebanon. It is out of the question, I told him, that the Christian world should abandon, leave in the lurch, the embattled Christian minority threatened with extinction.

I also proposed to him that he suggest to the Arab delegations that all of them adhere to what they have called a political armistice until the Geneva Conference convenes. I also requested him to intervene in Damascus on behalf of the Jews there and the need to get them out of Syria. I also told him, in connection with the resolution of the nine European countries, that precisely the Europeans should be very aware of presenting proposals which may lead to the shedding of Jewish blood. I told him that the European continent is drenched in Jewish blood, the Rhine, the Danube, the Vistula and the Dnieper are full of Jewish blood. And precisely the Europeans must be extremely careful of any proposal



liable to bring about more shedding of Jewish blood. He should know, and all the Europeans should know, that the proposal to establish a Palestinian state in Eretz Yisrael means one thing only: The shedding of Jewish blood. In the name of humanity, let all the Europeans, without exception, beware of presenting such proposals.

I had meetings with the U.S. Jewry. I should like to tell the Knesset that these meetings stirred me to the depths of my heart. The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations in the United States — the organization representing mighty, proud, influential American Jewry — stated on the day after the elections that it would support Israel following the change brought about democratically by the voter's ballot, by a supreme expression of democracy in Israel, by the proof that Israel is indeed the only democracy in the Middle East: Both in its free exercise of the vote and in the transference of power, as in the most well-ordered of countries. Rabbi Schindler, who heads the Conference of Presidents, worked hard and did much to unite the whole of American Jewry around Israel after the elections. And from the Knesset rostrum I wish to thank Rabbi Schindler and all the members of the Presidents' Conference for the prodigious work they have done since 17 May to unite Jewish public opinion — and not just Jewish opinion — in the United States around the State of Israel.

I had two meetings with the Presidents' Conference, prior to going to Washington and after returning to New York. And in both of them heart went out to heart. We stood as one people in the full sense of the term, just as Herzl wrote in those days: We are one people. And we promised one another that we would continue to stand together. Even should there be differences of opinion, there is no reason why they should not stand together with us with one heart.

I held meetings with great Torah sages: with Rabbi Schneerson, with Rabbi Feinstein, with Rabbi Soloveitchik, and with other wise men of the time, learned and wise in the Torah. I was profoundly moved by them. They are Jews who believe in the eternity of the Jewish people. I learned much from them, received their blessing for my mission, for the path in which I was about to embark. And I wish to thank them from the bottom of my heart for the encouragement I received from them: and for their blessing which attended me.

I also held a meeting with representatives of Conservative and of Reform Jewry. They were within the perimeter of Jewish national unity. I did not have to speak with them on the matters which were at the centre of my talks with the President and his advisers, but I gave them a concise report. But this Jewry had a problem concerning conversion. They spoke with me frankly and I of course reciprocated. They said that a change in the law was liable to lead to a situation in which they — Conservative and Reform Jewry — would not be able to acquiesce. As it would adversely affect them. And therefore they asked that this change not be made. I informed them of my commitment.

I made this commitment not out of surrender to the N.R.P. or to Agudat Yisrael or to Po'alei Agudat Yisrael, but out of personal conviction, because that is how I was raised and that is how I was educated, and in a free country every person has the right to follow his opinion and adhere to his faith: That is to say, that the Jewish people has only one religion and one nationality, its nationality is Jewish and its religion is Jewish, and for a Jew there is no distinction between nationality and religion.

I explained to them that, fundamentally, in its content, conversion is a Halachic concept, and we shall do no injustice in declaring that a Halachic concept must be according to the Halacha. I informed them that it is my commitment as Prime Minister to work for

the crystallization of a parliamentary majority to amend the law to say: "Conversion according to Halacha." I told them that this commitment was seriously made and I intend to carry it out, that is, to hold talks to persuade Knesset members of all factions to support a private member's bill when it is tabled. We did not reach agreement on this matter. On the other hand, we did agree that a delegation of their representatives would come to Israel to talk to me, the Minister of Interior and all circles in the country, in the Knesset and in the Cabinet — and we shall try to reach an understanding.

I had meetings with masses of Jews — with thousands — in the United States: Very heartwarming and moving. And in these meeting I felt that there is a high morale among the Jews of the diaspora, and faith, faith in our right and in our future, and readiness to stand together.

I had the opportunity to address the American people. I think that, thanks to the modern communications media, I spoke, perhaps, to every home in America. The questions were pointed. I replied as best as I could, as far as my understanding and faith would permit. But I can say that the feedback was in the main positive, and this feedback I also heard from members of the Administration, of the Senate and of the Congress.

In coming to the conclusion of my remarks, I should like to say, that it was one of the most remarkable experiences of my life for me to meet the President of the United States, Mr. Carter. With your kind permission, Madam Chairman, I should like to reiterate what I have already stated: I spent eight full years in the company of a man without whom I think the State of Israel would not have arisen, my master and teacher, whose very presence was an inspiration: Ze'ev Jabotinsky — and I have never been easily impressed by any personality. I have seen presidents, prime ministers, cabinet ministers, distinguished writers. I am not easily impressed, but I emerged from my talks in Washington deeply impressed. The President of the United States is an outstanding personality. He has a quick grasp of the heart of the issue, he has the capacity to take decisions in a short time, he is imbued with love of human liberty: therefore he insists on human rights, and I am certain that in that sphere the State of Israel will give him unreserved support. Human rights must be maintained in the countries of the east just as in the countries of the west: Against all tyranny, be it what it may; against all dictatorship, be it what it may, human rights must be maintained, and he insists on this. I am certain he will do great and wonderful things for the rights of men as men.

Our talks were frank. We had five hours of talks, among them nearly two hours — at all events, more than an hour and a half — of totally private talks: He and I were the only ones in the room where we spoke. I am certain the Knesset will not ask me to give the contents of such personal talks. They were conducted with full trust, and this is the conclusion we reached: we have differences of opinion at present — it is known that there may be differences of opinion between two countries — and there is also a great deal of agreement on important matters. The differences of opinion need not cause a rift between the United States and the State of Israel, and I trust that that is how things will work out.

As free men, as friends, and, in my conviction, as allies — because we are contributing much to the national security of the United States, and shall go on doing so — we shall discuss every question within the bounds of the differences of opinion. We shall make every effort to reach agreement, or, if need be, to agree that we have not agreed — but the friendship will be preserved and intensified between the mighty democracy, the hope of all mankind and standard-bearer of freedom and democracy under the leadership of its President, who is both its leader and the leader of the free world — and the resurgent Jewish

state, a small country realizing the great historic vision of the Jewish people, which was savagely persecuted throughout the generations and in this generation has suffered massacre, and which, with its own efforts and the last vestiges of its national strength, with the heroism of its fighting sons and the effort of its blessed pioneers, established the state for us. And we shall all see that it shall exist as the Jewish state in our land for all the generations to come.

## 26. Press Conference with President Carter, 28 July 1977.

*Additional light and information on the Carter-Begin talks was provided by President Carter when he discussed at length the Middle East crisis in a press conference. He said that the issue of Israeli settlements in the territories was not an insurmountable problem and he had discussed it at length with Mr. Begin. On the P.L.O representation issue, the American view was still that the Palestinians ought to be represented at Geneva after they "forego their commitment presently publicly espoused that Israel should be destroyed". Excerpts from the questions and answers on the Middle East follow:*

**Question:** Mr. President, in your view, did the Israeli embrace of the three settlements on the West Bank diminish in any way the prospects for a negotiated settlement in that part of the world?

**A.** Yes, I think that any move toward making permanent the settlements in the occupied territories or the establishment of new settlements, obviously increases the difficulty in ultimate peace.

It is not an insurmountable problem. The matter of legalizing existing settlements was a subject that was never discussed by me or Prime Minister Begin. My own concern was with the establishment of new settlements. And I let him know very strongly that this would be a matter that would cause our own government deep concern.

This matter of settlements in the occupied territories has always been characterized by our government, by me, and my predecessors as an illegal action, but I think that the establishment of new settlements, or the recognition of existing settlements to be legal — both provide obstacles to peace, obstacles which I think we can overcome, by the way.

**Q.** Mr. President, since you came into office, you have stressed so many times that your policy is to restrain arms sales, that we should not be the arms merchants of the world. Now you are proposing arms to Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, and Iran, and there are millions of dollars in the pipeline for arms for Israel — all areas of potential conflict. Why?

**A.** These proposals are compatible with my new arms sales policy which is to reduce the level of arms sales in each succeeding year.

Many of these agreements are the result of long-standing commitments by our own government to those nations which are allies and friends. We have tried to keep a well balanced approach to the whole question.

The most highly divisive issue recently has been the AWACS sale to Iran. They were contemplating a radar detection system using ground-based and air-launched mechanisms that would have been about twice as expensive. But we are determined to begin a downward trend in the sale of weapons throughout the world. But at the same time, of

course, we have to have a pre-eminent consideration — the defense of our own country and an adequate defense capability of our allies.

I would comply with my policy that after this fiscal year, 1977, that in '78 and subsequent years there would be an overall reduction in sales.

I am also trying to get our own allies, France, England and others, and also the Soviet Union, to join us in this effort. And next year under the auspices of the United Nations there will be a world disarmament conference in which we would not only participate but hope to play a leading role. But the policies that I have pursued will be a much greater constraint on arms sales than has been the policy in the past.

**Q.** I would like to go back to the Mideast, if I may. Some people believe that in your meeting with Mr. Begin, Mr. Begin came away with sort of the best of it. They think you rather embraced him to the extent that our leverage with Israel has now been reduced. Would you comment on that, and would you tell us also what you think now the prospects of peace versus another war in the Mideast?

**A.** After I met with President Sadat and King Hussein and President Assad, there were major outcries in Israel and among the American Jewish community that I had overly embraced the Arab cause. And I think now that Mr. Begin has visited me, there is a concern we have overly embraced the Israeli cause. Obviously, when these leaders come to see me or when I go to see them, there is an effort to understand one another, to have a basis of comprehension and consultation that can provide hope for the future.

Our position in the Middle East has been very carefully spelled out to the degree of specificity that I choose. We have always made it clear that ultimately the agreement had to be approved and mutually beneficial to the Israelis and also the Arab neighbors as well.

I think that we have a good chance to go to Geneva. There are obstacles still to be resolved. I hope that every leader involved directly in the discussions, the four major countries there, will join with us and the co-chairman of the prospective conference, the Soviet Union, in restraining their statements, not being so adamant on issues and trying to cool down the situation until all can search out common ground, and then hope to minimize the differences.

Secretary Vance will leave this weekend to visit the three Arab nations plus Saudi Arabia, and then come back through Israel as well. When he returns to the United States after a week or so, we will have a clearer picture of the differences that still divide the countries.

I think the major stumbling block at this point is the participation in the negotiations by the Palestinians representatives. Our position has been that they ought to be represented and that we will discuss with them these elements that involve the Palestinians and other refugees at the time they forego their commitment presently publicly espoused that Israel should be destroyed. But until the Palestinian leaders adopt the proposition that Israel is a nation, that it will be a nation permanently, that it has a right to live in peace — until that happens, I see no way that we would advocate participation by them in the peace negotiations.

But these matters are still very fluid. What gives me hope is that I believe that all national leaders with whom I have talked genuinely want to go to Geneva to try to work out permanent peace. That is the primary basis for my optimism. But it is difficult, and past statements by these leaders when they were at war or in the status of prospective war have been very rigid and very adamant and sometimes abusive and filled with hatred and distrust.

We are trying to get them to change from those positions of distrust to one of genuine search for peace. I think it is accurate to say in closing my answer, that both sides now have at least a moderate amount of confidence in us, and I have tried to take a balanced position to enhance that trust in us. If I should ever take a biased position on the part of one of the parties, then the other parties would simply forego any dependence upon us.

So I am very careful in my statements, privately and publicly, to be consistent, and also to be fair.

**Q.** Could I follow up on that, Mr. President? I believe you said just a moment ago that Mr. Begin gave you no advance hint of this action that he took this week on the settlements. You said that you discussed future settlements. Can you tell us what he said about that? Is he going to encourage new settlements there, and what did you tell him about that?

**A.** Mr. Begin did not give me any promise about his action on the settlement question. I did describe to him our long-standing position on the settlements which I have already outlined, and told him that this was a major item of potential differences between Israel and the Arab countries and my strong hope that nothing would be done by the Israeli Government in establishing new settlements that might exacerbate an already difficult position.

He listened to me very carefully. He said this was a major political issue in Israel, that in many instances he and his opposition, political parties in Israel, felt the same about it, but that he was certainly aware of our concern. But he did not give me any commitments about what he would do.

And to answer the other part of your question, he did not give me any prior notice that they were going to recognize the legality of the settlements involved.

**Q.** Mr. President, isn't there a basic conflict between all the talk of progress we heard around here during the Begin visit and at the time he left and the first action that he took upon returning to Israel and the rejection of the idea that we could have any influence over what moves he might make to the West Bank settlements?

**A.** Well, I think it is not fair to overly criticize Prime Minister Begin. The fact is that under the previous Mapai coalition, the Labor Government, that settlements have been built there, a fairly large number. The number of people involved is quite small, and this is not a new thing. I think it would be a mistake to overemphasize it or to exaggerate the significance of it. We feel that any restraint that Prime Minister Begin might want to exert on this subject would certainly be contributory toward peace.

I think he is in a position now of great strength in Israel. I think that his voice would be honored by the Israeli people. But he, like myself, has run on campaign commitments and I think he is trying to accommodate the interest of peace as best as he can. That doesn't mean that the settlements are right, but I think it would not be proper to castigate him unnecessarily about it because he is continuing policies that have been extant in Israel for a long time. And the Israeli Government has never claimed that these settlements are permanent. What they have done is to say that they are legal at the present time...

**Q.** Mr. President, at the risk of going back over well-plowed ground, I would like to ask you why it is that you did not ask Mr. Begin what his plans were concerning the existing settlements on the West Bank and more specifically, were you led to believe from your own studies in advance of those talks that he was not going to take this action?

**A.** I hate to admit it to you, Mr. Schram, but I did not think about raising the subject of recognizing the legality of those settlements. The item that I wanted to discuss with him, and I did, both in the public meeting with the Cabinet members and also privately upstairs in the White House, was the establishment of new settlements. As I pointed out to him, as I

have said earlier, that I thought the establishment of new settlements would be a very difficult thing for the public opinion to accept, both here and in the Arab countries, and that if — he pointed out to me that the new settlers as a result of his campaign statements and those of his opponents, were eager to go into the area.

I don't think it is violating any confidence to tell you what I said; that was, that I thought it would be easier for us to accept an increase in the population of existing settlements than it would be to accept the establishment of new settlements. But I did not think about talking to him concerning the granting of legal status to those settlements. It was an oversight which never was discussed.

## **27. Press Conference with Secretary of State Vance, 29 July 1977.**

*Secretary Vance was due to leave for the Middle East on 1 August, a trip that was planned before the elections in Israel. The purpose of the journey was to discuss substantive and procedural issues with the region's leaders in order to pave the way for the resumption of the Geneva Conference. It was of utmost importance to have a well-prepared conference and to narrow the differences on various items, chief among them the participation of Palestinians at Geneva. Following are the Middle East excerpts of the news conference which indicate the U.S. thinking on the major issues:*

**Q.** Regarding your trip to the Middle East, Mr. Begin, when he was here, outlined some procedures that he would like to have followed at the Geneva Peace Conference, and I wondered when you visit the Arab leaders whether you would endorse or promote those procedures, have ideas of your own, try to solicit theirs, or some combination thereof.

**A.** When I go to the various capitals, I will discuss with the leaders the proposals made by Mr. Begin. I will also suggest certain proposals which we have for the convening of a Geneva Conference, with respect to both questions of substance and questions of procedure; and of course I will seek the views of the various heads of governments with whom I will be meeting.

I hope as a result of all this process we may by the end of the trip have a clearer idea of the ability with which we have been able to narrow the differences that exist between the parties and move closer to the necessary framework for convening a Geneva Conference.

**Q.** Does that mean you don't necessarily endorse or disapprove on the other hand, of the Begin procedural suggestions?

**A.** As to the proposal as a whole, we will have some proposals that we would prefer to put forward than that, but we will put them forward for discussion.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, on that point you said once you would be putting forth American proposals for, as I understood it, substantive settlement in the Middle East. Will these proposals from the United States be primarily related to procedure, or will you be putting terms of a settlement in the area?

**A.** We will have some suggestions to make to the parties both on the question of substance as well as the questions of procedure. I think I indicated to most of you at various times in the past that during this trip we would be having suggestions to make to the parties on both these sets of issues.

**Q.** One of the ideas that has been raised and attributed to the United States is that the West Bank would go under a trusteeship, apparently an Israeli trusteeship, for a period of several years during which time a referendum would be held determining the future of the West Bank. Is that in fact one of the ideas that you will be bringing?

**A.** Let me remind you of what I said before: That if we have suggestions to make during this trip, we would be making them to the parties rather than making them publicly.

We believe, and the parties agree, that if we are going to play an effective role, the best way that we can play an effective role is to make any suggestions which we have directly to the parties, in confidence, and then receive their comments on those specific proposals - which can then be discussed with the other parties, rather than making them public. And we are going to adhere to that procedure.

And therefore I think it is inappropriate and would not be constructive for me to go into any specifics of what we might be suggesting to the parties.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, President Carter yesterday put positively, on the issue of the P.L.O., something that in the past has been put in essentially negative terms - and that is that we would be willing to deal with the P.L.O. if they accepted Israel's right to exist as a nation and to exist permanently.

Are you excluding, on this trip, any possible meeting with any representative of the P.L.O.?

**A.** I do not expect that there will be any meeting with the P.L.O. during this trip.

As the President said, there has yet been no suggestion by the Palestinians that they were prepared to do the things which President Carter outlined. In the absence of that, we feel ourselves constrained by the agreements we made in Sinai II not to have any discussions with them.

**Q.** To just follow that up: Recognizing that this is a hypothetical question, if such a statement were to be made during your trip, would you consider the possibility of such a meeting?

**A.** That is a hypothetical question.

**Q.** Your Arab-Israeli Desk confirmed yesterday that the United States never recognized de jure the occupation of the West Bank by Jordan from 1948 to '67, and this Desk has also designated Britain as the last legal ruler of the West Bank, even though Britain originally seized the West Bank by military conquest from the Turks.

And my question is: Do you believe that until 1922, when the British were granted the League of Nations Mandate, that the British occupation of the West Bank was legal or illegal?

**A.** That is a legal question on which I have, myself, not devoted the kind of attention that permits me at this point to give you the kind of technical answer that is required.

**Q.** May I follow that up by asking this, Sir: Since the Mandate incorporated Great Britain's Balfour Declaration of a Jewish National Homeland in Palestine, along with Mr. Churchill's designation of 80 percent of Palestine as the Emirate of Trans-Jordan, later the Kingdom of Jordan, do you believe that the remaining 20 percent of Palestine, in which Churchill limited Jewish settlements to the area West of the Jordan, was an excessive expectation for the Zionists?

**A.** Again, that is a technical question on which I do not wish to comment.

**Q.** Do you expect to know definitely by the end of this trip whether the Geneva Peace Conference can be reconvened this fall?

**A.** No, I don't know. It will all depend on what happens during the trip, and I think that

it is possible that at the end of the trip we will not know. If that is the case, then we would plan to have further meetings, and one of the things which we have been discussing in the way of procedure for those further meetings is to have the further meetings at the time that the various foreign ministers will be in New York for the Geneva assembly.

**Q.** There has been a certain amount of talk about the reconvening of the conference in October. Isn't there a danger — what are the risks of an ill-prepared conference — that there really is not enough time to prepare the substance to be negotiated at that conference prior to October.

**A.** We have said consistently that we believe it is important to have a well-prepared conference and I still believe that to be the case. And therefore I think we must do everything within our power to try and reach as much agreement as possible on both substance and procedure before going to Geneva.

And how much we can accomplish during this trip remains to be seen.

But, as I said, if we cannot get it done on this trip, then we are prepared to continue the discussions starting thereafter, probably with meetings in New York at the time of the General Assembly.

**Q.** The British decoupling two days ago the pound from the dollar was at least in part a reaction to your recognition of the fact that the United States was, in essence, attempting to set off another oil embargo as economic warfare, so to speak, against the Europeans, to disrupt the emerging relations between OPEC and Western Europe around some formation of a new monetary system.

My question is this: The Arabs, even before the decoupling move, before the Libya-Egypt situation, had called an emergency OPEC meeting for August 4th to discuss whether or not payments should still be made in dollars.

In view of the worsening situation—and it seems as though our policy in North Africa has provoked—

**A.** The worsening situation between what?

**Q.** The worsening situation right now in terms of dollars, internationally, that is to say, the Arabs have even more incentive now in trying to go with some alternative to the dollar, which was ironically provoked by policy by this Administration that was trying to set the opposite thing going. But anyway, my question is are you orienting anything in your trip toward that OPEC meeting, and what is the estimation of the State Department about what might come out of it?

**A.** The answer is no. I am not orienting anything in my trip toward that particular problem which you raise. I am going to be concerned exclusively with the subject of trying to resolve with the parties the necessary procedural and substantive matters which would be required in order to move toward Geneva solutions.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, the previous Administration displayed some reluctance to go to Geneva because, apparently, there was the feeling that the Soviet Union might not be too helpful. That was during the full bloom of detente. And I wonder, now that some of the blush is off that rose, what makes you believe that the Soviet Union would be more helpful than before.

**A.** We have kept closely in touch with the Soviet Union on the question of a Middle East Conference. We have not only regular meetings which we agreed to at my Geneva meeting with Foreign Minister Gromyko, but I quite frequently discuss the situation of the Middle East with Ambassador Dobrynin, bringing him up to date with the most recent events, and he does the same insofar as we are concerned.



This has been, I think, very useful. We feel that, as co-chairmen, we have a joint responsibility with the Soviet Union to try and bring the parties to conference, and we plan to work together and to cooperate in this endeavor.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, what specifically do you think the Soviet Union is inclined to do to help, not just to come to Geneva, in the process toward peace?

**A.** They have indicated they are willing to use their influence with some of the parties to urge them to exhibit flexibility, which will be necessary if we are going to be able to get to Geneva.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, have you received any kind of signals from the Palestine Liberation Organization, short of meeting the American requirement of recognition of Israel, in which the PLO is suggesting a way in which they may have a role in the Geneva Conference?

**A.** We have received nothing directly from them. Other countries have passed to us information which they say comes from the Palestinian Liberation Organization with respect to the Geneva Conference and their desire to participate in a Geneva Conference, but we have nothing in terms of first-hand information.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, can you give us some of the shape of what the PLO signals are like? What are they prepared to do, even told to you through intermediaries, to gain a seat at the Geneva Conference.

**A.** Let me say that it is sufficiently unclear at this point, Mr. Kalb, that I would hesitate at this point to indicate what they are, and I want to check first-hand with those who have communicated this information to us, namely some of the states which I will be visiting, to find out exactly what it is that has been said.

**Q.** May I just take the liberty of asking you whether you relayed any messages through the intermediaries back to the PLO?

**A.** No.

**Q.** Following up on the business about the Russians and the Geneva Conference which you mentioned a moment ago — They are co-chairmen — in view of that and the close relationship, have you outlined to them the suggestions and proposals that you plan to take to the Middle East? And, if you have, can you tell us whether they are in agreement with it?

**A.** The answer is, I am going to. I have not yet; I will before I leave. And, obviously, the answer is there are no responses as a result of that.

**Q.** Do you foresee a time in the near or distant future when the United States will or may cut military and economic aid to Israel in order to pressure for concessions?

**A.** I don't see that, no.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, Mr. Begin is reported to have agreed to President Carter's suggestion that U.N. observers be stationed in southern Lebanon or on the Israeli-Lebanese border. Is this the sort of suggestion you might be carrying into your talks with Lebanese, Syrian and other leaders in the area?

**A.** That is obviously a question which will be discussed. I have discussed this previously with the Lebanese when I was last in Beirut. I think it's a constructive suggestion, one which should be pursued.

It will require agreement among a number of parties, but I am very pleased that Mr. Begin has taken a positive attitude with respect to that because I think it is pretty important to find ways of increasing stability in southern Lebanon and the preservation of law and order there.

**Q.** I am puzzled by what seems to be a difference in view as to the prospects for success

in Geneva between yourself and the President. Last week, after his meeting with Mr. Begin, the President was very optimistic about going to Geneva. He repeated that optimistic view yesterday. And, if I understand you today, you're not only uncertain about where this thing is going to shake down on your trip, but you're talking about further talks after this trip.

Now, is there a difference in view between yourself and the President on the prospects for this conference?

A. The answer is no, and let me explain why. The President has said that he is very hopeful that we can go to Geneva at an early date. I share that view completely. He indicated that the basis of that view was that all of the parties have said that they want to go to Geneva, they want to go to Geneva promptly, and that they are prepared to go without preconditions.

Therefore, I think that there is a basis, based upon what they have said, which indicated a desire on the part of all the parties to move to Geneva at an early date.

There are, as the President pointed out, however, some difficult issues that have to be resolved before that can be done. That's the purpose of this trip. And what I pointed out merely was that if we couldn't accomplish it on this trip, then we'd continue the process to try and find ways to get over these hurdles.

Q. Mr. Secretary, you say there are some difficult issues yet to be settled. Are they the same ones that were there in February? Has this process of consultations that has been going on in Washington actually settled anything?

A. We have narrowed some of the issues, but a number of the problems which existed in January, some of the fundamental underlying problems, still exist.

Q. And those are essentially representation of Palestinians, the West Bank, and those are the same.

A. Those are still the most difficult problems.

Q. Mr. Secretary, if it is illegal for Israel to establish settlements on the West Bank, who then does have legal right to the West Bank?

A. There is, I think, an open question as to who has legal right to the West Bank.

Q. Well, if the question is open, how can it be illegal for Israel to move in there?

A. It is possible that with neither having a right, it is illegal for a third party to have a right. I think that is understandable.

## 28. Interview with President Carter, Time Magazine, 1 August 1977.

*The main point made by the President in this interview was that any leader in the Middle East, whose position "is in direct contravention to the position of all the other parties involved including ourselves and the Soviet Union... there would be a great impetus on that leader to conform with the overwhelming opinion". This was not the first time that Mr. Carter made reference to the Soviet Union as a major factor in the peace making process. This was the first time he hinted that public opinion would be against the leader who would stand in the way to peace against the majority's views. Excerpts:*

Q. The principles you have enunciated for a Middle East settlement are clearly not ac-

cepted by Israel. Why then do we press so hard for a Geneva Conference? Isn't it very likely that if it convenes it will break down?

A. That is certainly always a likelihood. It would be a mistake to assume that the Geneva Conference is going to be easy or brief. But it will be the first opportunity if it materializes for the Arab leaders and the Israeli leaders to meet together in extensive negotiations to understand one another's approach, positions, attitudes and to marshal the opinion of the world on the points in dispute.

I think if a particular leader of one of the countries should find that his position is in direct contravention to the position of all the other parties involved including ourselves and the Soviet Union and was a narrowly defined question in his own country there would be a great impetus on that leader to conform with the overwhelming opinion.

No one can guarantee success. It is a problem that has been extant for 29 years or more. Some say thousands of years. But I think it is a good first step and I think that anyone who would only go with a guarantee of success would probably not take the first step toward peace.

Q. If the conference breaks up in animosity and anger wouldn't that increase the danger of war?

A. That is a possibility. My genuine belief is that all the leaders want peace. They all have a publicly expressed position of flexibility that all items are negotiable. This is our best hope in many years.

Q. If the Israeli position at Geneva should be quite different from yours would you find some means of persuasion or pressure?

A. I don't know. I have to say that our positions that have been spelled out in general terms deliberately are the ones we still espouse.

They have not been completely accepted by the Israelis nor the Arab leaders of course and we can't say yet that they are completely endorsed by the Soviets either. I think there has been a general acceptance of the proposition that the step by step incremental approach is too long, too tedious and leaves unhealed wounds. I think there is a general acceptance of the proposition that we ought to have a comprehensive settlement based on peace treaties with all the Arab nations and the Israelis being involved together. I can't anticipate now what our position would be. I would try to marshal the support of the leader first of all. Secondly the opinion of his people back home the constituencies that might exist in our own country that would have influence around the world opinion that exists in the European Community and in the Arab nations as well.

Q. Did Mr. Begin tell you that he would drop his opposition to any PLO participation in the Geneva Conference if the PLO were to accept the principle of the existence of Israel?

A. No. Mr. Begin talked to me about Palestinian refugees and in his other statements he has said that he did not object to Palestinians being represented in the Arab delegations or in the Jordanian delegation. When pressed he said in his press conference that if they were identifiable members of the PLO leadership that he would object. He went on to add immediately because the PLO are publicly committed to the destruction of Israel. I can't speak for Mr. Begin (but) if the Palestinian leaders adopted that position (acceptance of Israel's existence) or espoused in the UN resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for negotiations at Geneva we would immediately commence plans to begin talks with the Palestinian leaders. I hope that Mr. Begin would accept that (the participation of some Palestinian leaders at Geneva) but I don't have any way to predict what he would do.

Q. Mr. Begin announced legalization of the Israeli settlements in occupied territories

only a few days after your cordial meeting. It has been suggested in effect he set you up.

A. I think I have read some newspaper reports that said Mr. Rabin accused Mr. Begin of being set up by me. Mr. Begin and I instantly liked each other and trusted each other and we had the frankest possible discussions. We did not mention the subject of legalizing existing settlements. I did not think about it. I reemphasized to Mr. Begin our national position is and has been that the settlements in the occupied territories were illegal. I also let him know that I thought the establishment of new settlements would be an obstacle to peace. And that is a position that we still maintain.

Q. Are you getting any indications of flexibility from any of these leaders in private that we are not seeing or hearing in public?

A. Yes. I have had indications from all of them that predicated on future demonstrations of good faith by other nations involved they would be as forthcoming as possible.

Q. If we knew what was said between you and Begin during your private meeting would we be more optimistic?

A. I can't answer that. I think that Mr. Begin has fairly well expressed his opinion in public. There were some private conversations that made me optimistic. I think he also feels optimism.

## **29. Remarks by Prime Minister Begin on the situation in Lebanon, 8 August 1977.**

*Speaking to a visiting Israel Bonds delegation, the Prime Minister for the first time, officially confirmed that Israel was assisting the Christians in southern Lebanon and providing them with military aid. The Prime Minister dwelt at length on the reason for the Israeli concern and the nature of Israel's involvement in Lebanon.*

Ladies and Gentlemen, now I would like to tell you about what my eyes saw in the north yesterday. I will dwell now on the problem of Lebanon. What a story. Lebanon actually was dismantled by the P.L.O. There are thousands of Palestinian Arabs in Lebanon, they got arms from the Soviet Union, including artillery and the Lebanese army was dispersed. There is a new President without an army. The Syrians invaded Lebanon, occupied most of Lebanese territory — This is an occupying power. Why do the Syrians have a right to be in Lebanon? It's independent country. It has a special tradition. And with a special regime at the time, as a result of an agreement between the various communities. One of those communities is the famous Maronite-Christian Community, one of the most ancient Christian faiths. Since 1840 they have suffered ten massacres at the hand of the Muslim majority. It isn't the lot of the Jewish People — we suffered more — but the fact is that they, too, are a minority in Lebanon, a minority in the Middle East facing an overwhelming Muslim majority, which tried time and again to wipe them out, and they suffered 10 massacres in 100 years.

Now the north of Lebanon is cut off from the south. So the south became completely isolated. In the north there is the Syrian occupation army, and there are the Palestinians, and very many armed groups. For the time being there is a cease-fire, and they can live — although it almost destroyed Beirut, which became a shambles during the civil war, but the south is a special case. Yesterday I saw with my own eyes the south of Lebanon. I regret I

don't have now the map. One day you will see it. I showed it to the President and also to the Secretary General of the United Nations. The President understood. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Waldheim was astonished. I was astonished by his astonishment. He saw the map. You can see there a few villages and townships of the Christians. The sea of Muslim villages in which there are placed the Palestinians with the Soviet supplied artillery, and they open up a barrage every night upon the Christian villages, and then Mr. Waldheim, told me, oh, now I understand — I understand the position. Now that fight goes on for two years. The United Nations is supposed to keep the peace in the world. And so this is the way they keep the peace. This is the general description of the situation. A small Christian minority threatened by an overwhelming Muslim majority — with their very existence. Yesterday I met them. I saw the terrain of the mountains, the few Christian villages, the great sea of Muslim villages attacking the small minority.

They have problems of livelihood. Almost all the houses became floorless as a result of the bombardment by the P.L.O., Muslim artillery. Their children don't go to school. We just yesterday repeated our suggestion. We shall build a school for their children on our side — they will collect their children and bring them by bus. They are afraid to bring all their children together, lest the shells will kill them, from the Muslims. They don't have any more water installations. Their pipelines were destroyed by the Muslim attacks. Now we will start today to build for them a pipeline and until then we supply them with water. Just water through our tankers. Wounded people are being brought every night from the other side to us and we take care of them through our medical corps. Yesterday I met also a Lebanese nurse, a Christian girl, a beautiful girl and she spoke to me Hebrew. I must tell you she asked me the following question: "Lama Lo" — Almost a question by a Sabra — "Lama Lo" — I only expected her to say "Betach she ken" — this is completely — It is completely Sabraic, very bad Hebrew. And so we help them. We help them militarily — No secret — It shouldn't be a secret — Public opinion in the United States and throughout the Christian world should know it. Without our military help the Christian minority would have long ago they would have been wiped out totally. No man, woman, or child would have been left — Mainly in Southern Lebanon, were it not for the help of the Jewish State. We cannot acquiesce in the attempts to destroy them. We, ourselves, were the minority for ages, persecuted, always living on a thread and then, although we are an overwhelming majority now in our own land, we are a very small minority in the Middle East. Now an attempt is being made of genocide — To kill off a religious minority only because they are a Christian minority. This is written in the international convention about Genocide, exactly. What is written there they try to do in reality in Southern Lebanon — So we help them. And when the barrage is being opened upon the Christian villages, we train our fire upon the origins of the hostile fire. And then it quiets down. Because our men can shoot well. This is the situation in South Lebanon. It was almost a secret for the last two years. Anyhow, the American People didn't know about that situation. The United Nations didn't know. The Secretary General got astonished when he looked at the map. Now you know — Everybody in America should know, and in France too. Catholic France — Christian France — Having been a patron of the Maronites for ages, now sold them down the river — The only materialistic calculations is how to find favour with those who have the oil. The oil. And therefore you are ready even to sacrifice the lives of your own co-religionists — Christians for that materialistic thing. Although there is no reason to submit to that pressure. They cannot drink the oil — They have to sell it. And when the free world takes a

stand, as President Carter did here a year ago, when he said that any attempt to renew the boycott will mean economic war upon the United States and the United States will take appropriate measures and then we can live, in God's good time — The free world will set itself free of that dependence on the mighty power called Abu Dhabi.

So my friends we shall go on helping the Christians in Lebanon. It's our moral duty, It's our moral commitment, but the Christian world should also do something about it. The United Nations, The United States and France can they really let down their own co-religionist to the danger of massacre of being annihilated? Well, that is a rhetorical question. The Christian world should answer it. We shall do our duty.

### **30. Remarks by President Carter on the PLO and Resolution 242, 8 August 1977.**

*During the first week of August, secretary of State Vance held talks in Egypt with President Sadat; both agreed that the groundwork for Geneva talks could be laid in a special working group of Arab and Israeli officials to meet in the United States in mid-September. The working group could be made up of Foreign Ministers. The idea was initially proposed by President Sadat during his talks in Washington with President Carter in April 1977. In Beirut Mr. Vance discussed economic aid to rehabilitate Lebanon after the civil war. Talks were also held in Damascus, Amman and Riyadh. In Saudi Arabia there were reports quoting a Palestinian source that the PLO informed the U.S. it would accept Resolution 242 if it were amended to include reference to the national rights of Palestinians. In Plaines, President Carter was asked about this report and following are his remarks:*

**Q.** There is some encouraging news out of the Middle East this morning. Any comment on the reports of the PLO?

**The President:** No we don't know yet what is going to happen. Until I get a complete report from Cy Vance — I get a message from him every night and then a briefing every morning. If the Palestinians will recognize the applicability of UN Resolution 242, then it would open up a new opportunity for us to start discussions with them and also open up an avenue that they might participate in the Geneva Conference. But whether they will do that, we don't know yet.

**Q.** If indeed they do recognize 242 wouldn't that more or less assure that the Geneva Conference will indeed begin?

**A.** I can't answer that question because there might be other obstacles to it. But I think I can be able to answer that question when Secretary Vance gets back. He has now decided, I think, to talk with some of the leaders in the Middle East. So this might be an encouraging sign.

**Q.** To get back to the other Arabs countries again?

**A.** Either double back or have additional conversations with them before he leaves the Middle East. He is going to stay over in London an extra day to talk to President Nyerere about Rhodesia and Namibia. So, I think things look better than they did. I hope we can work something out on the Palestinians. That is the biggest obstacle right now.

**Q.** We always ask you about the adverse developments. We have given you a chance to talk about a positive development for a change.

A. Thank you very much.

Q. What about prospects for a Geneva Conference in October? Still good?

A. Well, I would say they are about the same as they were. The biggest obstacle that we have detected, of course, is whether or not the Palestinians would participate in the discussions.

Our position has been that until the Palestinians and their leaders recognize Israel's right to exist, we would not have conversations with them ourselves. So, if the Palestinians do adopt as a basis for the discussions United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338, then that would certainly make it easier to go.

Q. Have you had any contact with the Palestinians formally, informally to indicate their position?

A. I think a better word would be indirectly. We have not had any direct conversations with them. But, of course, they are sending us messages through the Syrians, the Saudi Arabians, the Jordanians and the Egyptians. So, we have a means to contact them and to exchange ideas with them directly. But we are not going to meet with the Palestinian leaders as long as they are committed to the destruction of Israel.

Q. What were they saying, indirectly?

A. That they may adopt UN Resolution 242 which does recognize Israel, Israel's right to exist permanently and in peace with secured borders. The thing that has made the Palestinians reluctant to do this was at the time 242 was passed, it only referred to Palestinians as refugees. If the Palestinians should say, "We recognize UN Resolution 242 in its entirety, but we think the Palestinians have additional status other than just refugees," That would suit us okay.

### 31. Press conference with Foreign Minister Dayan, 9 August 1977.

*On the eve of the talks with Secretary Vance, Mr. Dayan spelled out the Israeli position which was: no PLO participation in Geneva in any way, no talks with a united Arab delegation and peace treaties instead of interim arrangements. Israel rejects the return to the 1967 borders and the establishment of a Palestinian state. As for Sinai, Israel would be willing to withdraw in the framework of peace to lines that will give it security. Israel is not prepared to have any foreign rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel will attend the proposed talks without any prior conditions or commitments. Following are excerpts from the questions and answers in English:*

**Mr. Dayan:** I can't speak for the PLO, nor for the Americans. So I can't say a word about the American attitude towards the PLO or the PLO undertaking, or promises about their attitude toward 242. What I can say — on our behalf, is that even if the PLO will state that they do accept the 242, and even if they say that they accept it without any reservations, it will not mean that we accept the PLO as partners for negotiations for peace, or as participants in the Geneva Peace Conference.

Q. Why not?

A. Because we are dealing with states, and we are dealing with the Geneva Peace Conference, which it is very clearly stated that it would be negotiated between states, countries

and not parties, and the countries are Jordan, speaking for the Palestinians — we do object to Arab Palestinians, not the PLO, but Arab Palestinians, to participate with the Jordanian delegation. But we do not see any reason to discuss or to negotiate with any party, which is not a state, to say nothing about the PLO, and especially with the PLO of which objective is to destroy Israel.

So that's why not.

**Q.** If I understand correctly what you said before — you said that Israel would not rule out separate negotiations with sovereign states. What's the purpose of calling for the conference as soon as possible?

What is the purpose of calling for a conference if you say you want to negotiate with each state separately?

**A.** Why not, we think that like it was done in the first stage of the Geneva Peace Conference... there were negotiations in Kilometre 101 with the Egyptians and there were negotiations with the Syrians — and we want to sign a peace treaty with each country. And you can't do it with one mission speaking on behalf of all of the Arab countries. Of course they can consult with one another, but once everybody agrees that the objective of the peace conference is to sign a peace treaty — with the Arab countries, you must do it individually with each country.

**Q.** Does that mean then that your concept of a renewed Geneva Peace Conference will be like the previous one — a pretty non-formal meeting?

**A.** No, no, not at all. We want to negotiate not only the formal and the final meeting there — and we are ready to negotiate in Geneva, we are ready to negotiate in any other place but what I'm saying is that ultimately, the signing of the negotiations — and the signing, the conducting of a peace treaty, must be done between Israel and each country. You cannot do it with — between Israel and all the Arab countries together.

**Q.** Mr. Minister how would you assess the progress now to reconvene the Geneva Peace Conference this year?

**A.** Well that I think we shall know better when the talks shall end in just one day's time — tomorrow.

**Q.** Mr. Minister, would Israel withdraw from any or all of the West Bank and Gaza in the context of an overall settlement?

**A.** Well I hope not, and our attitude is and our position is and I'm saying this is our position, and we are ready to negotiate with different positions — if the Arab's come forward with different positions, we shall negotiate with it. There are no prior conditions either to the actual negotiations or the final conclusions. Once we sit down and negotiate with them, we might come to a different conclusion — decision. Just now, if you ask me about our position, before the meeting, before the negotiations started — our position is that we should not withdraw from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. But this is our position, and this is not a condition for the other parties to enter into negotiations. They can come forward with their own positions, including getting back the eastern part of Jerusalem. Whatever they want to ask along, according to the 242 Resolution and we shall negotiate with them, over their proposals, but we will come forward with our position, which I stated before.

**Q.** Would your government be willing to agree, before a Geneva Conference, to a statement on principle which outlines the general principles to be decided on at a conference — along the lines that President Carter has set forward — the withdrawal from territories occupied in '67, the establishment of a Palestinian entity in return for a peace for Israel.



**A.** I think that the principles which were stated in the 242 Resolution and the 338 Resolution are sufficient as the starting line for the negotiation. And I don't think that we have to go any farther before the negotiating starts.

**Q.** If you were asked to do so, would you be willing to consider doing so?

**A.** Well it depends what kind of principles. For instance if the principle would be that there should be a full peace treaty with diplomatic relationships, etc. — we shall accept it.

What I heard from Secretary Vance, and I don't think there is any violation of the agreement between our Foreign Minister in Washington or the Prime Minister's visit in Washington.

I don't think that there is any contradiction or violation of this agreement.

As far as the Geneva Peace Conference is considered, I don't think that the PLO or any other group — Palestinians or anyone should be a participant there. I think that we should negotiate there only with states, with governments, and as long as Jordan is representing the eastern line, then we have Egypt and Jordan and Syria — and if Lebanon wants to join it, and we can conclude peace with Lebanon, then I think that would be acceptable.

The question is what we are negotiating over. What do you mean in any form? What are we negotiating over? Now this is such a hypothetical question, that if the PLO will cease to be the PLO and if we should negotiate not peace — then I don't know what — but let's be clear — we are talking now about a Peace Conference, about putting peace, with peace treaties with the Arab countries — and we do not consider the PLO or any other group as a party for such treaties but the neighbouring countries: Egypt and Syria and Jordan and Lebanon.

I do anticipate to go to New York and the UN Assembly and if there will be also contact, negotiations between us and the Arab countries through the mediation, through the State Department, through Washington, through the administration, we shall participate with them.

Now I don't think this has got anything to do with the American attitude with the PLO, or with any other group. I'm talking about negotiations for peace treaties between us and the Arab countries. And if the PLO will not be included, in these negotiations, then I see no obstacle for having such discussions in the States — in New York or in Washington.

I want to say it in English that right at this moment, I don't know about any sign of the United States wish or tendency to change or to bring about any change in the 242 Resolution. Up to now I haven't heard anything in this spector or in this direction.

**Q.** Yesterday President Carter said that if the Palestinians were to accept 242 in a slightly modified form, he would open direct discussions with them. Do you expect a completely opposite view? Do you believe that there was adequate consultation between the United States and Israel on this question? Or do you regard it as a break in the special relationship between United States and Israel?

**A.** I don't want to refer to the question of the relationship between the United States and the PLO. We all know the American position about that, what they said about it in the past, and I don't want to try and guess about the future.

And I, what I can say here only about our position towards the PLO and not about the American position.

**Q.** After consultation about your view, between the United States and the PLO — between the United States and Israel?

**A.** As far as we are concerned, as far as I am concerned— I would rather not have the

Americans consulting or discussing with the PLO, or recognizing them under any circumstances.

**Q.** Mr. Dayan. You referred twice before to the PLO, or any other group, Palestinian group. Is there some idea afloat to somehow get around the PLO, and bring in some other Palestinian group? Because you keep warning about another group. Is there some idea around that you want to tell us about?

**A.** Yes, I do distinguish between the PLO and the Arab Palestinians, as part of other missions — now we would not object if Palestinian Arabs would take part with the Jordanian delegation. But I did say that we do not think that any such group should become an additional party in Geneva, because we have nothing to negotiate with them over because they are not a State. So that's the difference between the PLO and other groups — the Palestinians.

**Q.** If the PLO were to accept 242 in its pure form or a modified form and the United States were to begin talks — direct talks with the PLO, would that be a violation of Sinai 2?

**A.** That's highly hypothetical. Sinai 2 has got very clear positions and we have to see what it said, when and if, in order to see whether it is a violation or not. But basically speaking, as I said before, as far as we are concerned, we hope that the United States will not accept the PLO as a partner for negotiations or discussions about the future of the Middle East and peace and everything concerned with that, just because they accepted 242.

**Q.** As a Foreign Minister working within the framework of Resolution 242 do you foresee any difficulties for the State of Israel in the terms of this Resolution, to be changed slightly so that instead of referring to Palestinian refugees it might refer to the Palestinian people.

**A.** We do not support any change in the 242 and I'm happy to say that I haven't heard from anyone, till I came here, any idea of support to any change in the Resolution of 242. So we are in good company in this case.

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister are you concerned about the apparent differences between your country and the United States in regards to the matters leading to a Geneva Conference?

**A.** What I am worried about are the differences. Of course I would rather have the Americans supporting all our views, which is not in this case, and I think that it is known, we do not support the idea of going back to the old-line with minor modifications, we don't think that this can be — should be the basis for a peace agreement. We do not agree with any kind of idea about a Palestinian Homeland or entity — or whatever it is in this field. And I suppose that there are some other elements in which we do not see eye to eye with the Americans.

Well I think that we can go to the Geneva Peace Conference, we hope that we shall have the support of the United States, with our basis concepts, but even if we shall not have their entire support and we shall have some differences, well then we'll have to take care of ourselves. That's the outcome of that. Ladies and gentlemen I want all of us to remember we are a free sovereign country, we are now keeping all the territories — we want very much to make peace, we are ready to compromise — on some points — we are ready to find ways to live together with the Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. We are ready to put forward our positions. We are ready to listen to their positions, to their proposals and to negotiate it.

But it will be only Israel and the Arabs that can make peace. And I do believe the Americans stated time and again that they will not impose peace on us, or any terms of peace.

**Q.** Could you repeat for us the general principles you gave in the beginning in Hebrew?

**A.** We want a full peace treaty — a comprehensive peace treaty with normal relationships between us and the Arab countries signing this peace. With diplomatic relationships and free trade and everything which should take place between two countries which have normal relationships.

Then we want the Geneva Peace Conference, these negotiations to take place now in the near future, if possible in October or at any time this year. We are not looking for gaining time, or for — or we are not working for time, or for any interim agreement or partial agreement, or step-by-step or whatever you call it. We want full peace negotiations for it and if it is possible to agree to it right away, now.

We do not accept the idea of a Palestinian State, even under other titles — like “Homeland” or “entity” or whatever else. We are ready for territorial compromise in Sinai and we are ready to negotiate the line in the Golan Heights with Syria in order to satisfy the parties with the peace line, it should be satisfactory for the interests of the two parties. We do not think that the solution for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is either by a Palestinian State, or by any other form... So we are looking forward to a negotiation with the Arabs about how to live together — us and the Arab people — both in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank, and to find a *modus vivendi*. We do not accept the PLO as a party to negotiate peace with, or to accept them as a participant in the Geneva Peace Conference — but we do not object to Palestinian Arabs taking part within other Arab delegations, namely the Jordanian. And finally we want to sign peace treaties with the Arab countries and therefore it should be done, negotiated and concluded individually with each country, between us and the respective countries. It cannot be done between us and a united Arab delegation — something like that.

**Q.** What would the Israeli attitude be were the United States to give some form of assurances to the PLO?

**A.** What is exactly the question and please state the question clearly and loudly that even I can understand it.

**Q.** What would your attitude be, if the United States were to give some form of assurances to the PLO. If the PLO accepted the 242 and the United States assurance might be for Palestinian national rights?

**A.** But in what respect what should our attitude be? In what way? Whether should we then accept them as a party in the Geneva Conference? or what?

**Q.** What would your attitude be towards the United States?

**A.** We would — I don't think, and I don't know to this moment, any tendency by the United States that the PLO should take part in the Geneva Peace Conference. I haven't heard of that. But should there be such a position, we shall oppose it. I believe — ladies and gentlemen — I believe it is up to the parties, and that this is acceptable by everybody — also the United States of America — that it is only up to the parties to agree to an additional party in the Geneva Peace Conference. And unless all the parties agree to that, then no additional party can be included in the Geneva Peace Conference. In other words, unless we agree to that, no one can join that convention.

Now we do agree that Lebanon, which did not take part in the previous negotiations, would join the Peace Conference if they want to. But we shall not accept and agree for the

PLO and I don't know about any interpretation that deprives us of this right not to accept it, and then they won't come in.

**Q.** Early you spoke about a foreign power — that Israel would not agree to foreign power take over part of the West Bank. Would Jordan fall into the category of a foreign power, as far as you're concerned?

**A.** That is correct.

### **32. Toast by Prime Minister Begin at a dinner in honour of Secretary of State Vance, 9 August 1977.**

*At a state banquet in honour of Secretary Vance, the Prime Minister devoted most of his words to an explanation of the murderous nature of the PLO, and Israel's adamant refusal to deal in any way with this organization. Excerpts:*

Mr. Secretary, I welcome you on behalf of the Government and the People of Israel, to our land, to its capital Jerusalem, and to the Knesset, the centre of our democracy in which recently certain topographical changes took place. It took some time and some patience too, and now we can say that democracy is a matter of geography and topography. We greet you with all our heart...

Mr. Secretary, we are grateful to you that you undertook this journey to the Middle East, that you met the Arab rulers around. You did it in the cause and in the service of peace together with your colleagues, associates and advisors. It is not easy, it's a physical and intellectual effort and therefore we thank you that you undertook this journey. After we talked earlier in the evening I can say with the full knowledge of facts that the Secretary of State can already note a very serious, indeed great, achievement in the cause of peace. We congratulate you on this achievement and we shall all continue to find any road, any avenue, any way to promote peace.

When I was in Washington at the invitation of the President we brought on behalf of our government certain proposals to feed the momentum towards the peace-making process. I think it was a positive initiative and we will continue thinking again and again how to promote the momentum towards the peace-making process. I think I speak on behalf of every citizen — of every woman and man in this country — when I say that we yearn and pray for peace. In this room, Mr. Secretary, there are men who fought for the liberation of our people, risked their lives, led armies, won victories. On behalf of all those men I am entitled and am duty bound to say that now we have one ambition: To bring peace to our land, to our people, and to the region in which we live — and we do hope that peace will come.

We had earlier in the evening a very good, very helpful discussion and may I say — I believe the Secretary will bear me out — the reality is not as dark as the press was for the last 24 hours. And I think we shall make progress. Foreign ministers will visit your great country next month, you will meet with them and the momentum will go on and, of course, we all hope that the peace conference in Geneva will be made possible with proper representation and we shall start serious negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries, our neighbors, about conclusion and signing of peace treaties.

There is one problem which I will shortly dwell on which is now of international significance and interest. It is my duty to raise it. In order to clarify our attitude I will use an allegorical story. Let us assume that in a certain corner of the globe there is now a country called Hunland, the land of the Hun, and the basic philosophy of its government is a book called "Mein Kampf" — it may happen in our time. What would we do, the Jewish State, The State of Israel? Surely we would call upon all free nations to be watchful, to have no rapport with that Hunland because we all have the experience. All mankind paid the price. All nations, because of a basic mistake made in the 1930's, made the most horrible sacrifices to get rid of that evil. Admittedly we paid the highest price. When I use the word "Tertiased" I mean to say that we do not accept the known term of "Decimation". The Jewish People were not decimated, because that term stems from an old custom in the Roman Legions, that when a breach of discipline happened every tenth legionnaire was executed. Our people lost every third of its sons or its daughters and therefore we may use the word — it was tertiased. It is phantasmagoric — it would mean eighteen million Britons wiped out or ninety million Russians or two hundred eighty million Chinese or eighty million Americans. There are all those phantasmagoric figures worked out by scientists dealing with the megatons, but the megatons — although produced — will never be used. We have to live with such phantasmagoric figures and in our generation, and for generations to come. So we all have the experience and therefore we would call upon all free nations, "Be watchful." And then perhaps some would give us the advice "Don't take it seriously, it is not as it is written in the book." If that happens we would respectfully say to everyone in the world, "Gentlemen, forgive us, but we cannot accept that advice, we heard it forty years ago." Domestic propaganda written, they don't mean it, don't believe them and then we know what happened. Then perhaps somebody would say, "There is a certain resolution by the Security Council of the United Nations — we heard that that Hunland is ready to accept the resolution." What would be your reaction? I have no doubt we would say, again, "But we have our experience." Nobody paid attention to what was written in the book, in that infamous book, every word of it was brought into realization, and now there may be some people who learned from mistakes in history how to repeat them. Our generation with its experience should learn from mistakes in history how to avoid them.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, perhaps some of my honoured listeners tonight may have a suspicion that when I spoke about the imagined Hunland and "Mein Kampf" etc. I actually meant the organization known as P.L.O. I would like to reassure them — I meant it.

And now I will read to you a very short document, article one "Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian Arab People and an integral part of the great Arab homeland." No room for the Jew. "Jews who were living permanently in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians." (Note: The Premier is quoting article 6 of the 1968 Palestinian National Covenant). In other words, Jews who lived permanently in our land, called by foreigners Palestine, until the Balfour Declaration of 1917, will be considered Palestinians, all the others have to leave. The numbers: fifty or sixty thousand to be left — two million nine hundred and fifty thousand, circa, to go. The establishment of Israel is fundamentally null and void. Null and void. The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate document and what has been based upon them are considered null and void. The claim of the historical and spiritual tie between Jews and Palestine does not tally with its historical realities nor with the constituents of statehood in the true sense.

And I remember San Remo — 1922 — Britain was given the Mandate to make it possible to have a national home for the Jewish People to be reconstituted, and that is the

the most characteristic in that document. You can re-constitute a thing which existed — and then the words are used in the preamble “Recognition having been given to the historical connection between the Jewish people and Palestine.” Woodrow Wilson, the great President who gave to the world the concept of national self-determination, appointed a committee for the Middle East which brought him recommendations (that) it is just that Palestine should become a Jewish State. Palestine a Jewish State. The connection between Palestine and the Jewish People.

And now, after recognition by all the civilized nations of that historical connection, we hear that the claim of a historical and spiritual tie between Jews and Palestine is non-existent. Judaism and its character as a religion of revelation is not a nationality, now we are not even recognized as a nationality, only as a religion. We know when that recognition was given to us and the other denied.

Now also may I inform you, ladies and gentlemen, that since January the first there were many attacks carried out by that organization, all of them against civilians: Two killed, 120 wounded — but when we say wounded, we don't describe reality. We should say legless, armless, eyeless, handless people, maimed for a lifetime, all of them civilians, men, women and children. Because they turned the civilian population into a target of their attacks. They aimed to destroy a people, to annihilate a people, to renew the unheard of wrong done to the Jewish people for centuries: Homeless and defenceless — and turning (them) again into a defenceless and homeless people. Whereas that wrong was redressed by the proclamation of our independence, by the creation of our state — demented genocide killed man, woman and child.

It is a very serious matter to us, our dear friend, Mr. Secretary. some may say that we are sensitive about it. We are — because we have the experience. But perhaps sensitivity is not the proper word. I think it is ratio, logic.

To learn from experience is the duty of a man who bears responsibility for the future of his nation. And therefore our stand is clear: We want peace, we want to negotiate peace treaties, we brought proposals, alternative proposals, we have looked, we shall look for any avenue to bring about such negotiations to conclude peace treaties. But that organization, the philosophy of which is based on an Arabic “Mein Kampf,” is no partner whatsoever and never would be a partner for us to hold any talks — because such is the philosophy, such the design, and such the method. I believe all free mankind should accept that attitude and also have the same attitude. It's a danger to all free nations, to the free world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we believe that our great friend the United States of America will comprehend the attitude of Israel towards this special moral issue. We will have the same decision as far as participation in the Geneva Conference is concerned, because we believe in the moral greatness of the United States. Now we hope we shall make progress and achieve peace.

We are grateful to you, Mr. Secretary, for your efforts. We will do whatever we can to make your stay and that of your gracious lady enjoyable in our country.

And in this spirit of hope and optimism and faith in the future of our nations, and indeed of human liberty and justice, I raise my glass to the President of the United States of America, to our guests, Secretary of State — and to the everlasting friendship between the United States and Israel. Thank you very much.

### 33. Press conference with Secretary of State Vance, 11 August 1977.

*At the conclusion of his visit to Israel, and prior to his departure for Egypt and Syria, to brief their leaders on his talks with Israeli leaders in Jerusalem, Mr. Vance held a press conference in which he emphasized that fundamental differences remain between Israel and the Arab states on both procedural issues relating to the Geneva conference and on substantive questions. Geneva still remained the goal towards which all parties were striving. The Secretary stressed the refusal of the U.S. to impose its own terms. On that day, the U.S. embassy in Tel-Aviv released a statement denying categorically that meetings have taken place between the American ambassador in Cairo and PLO representatives. Texts of the Vance statement and answers to questions follow:*

I thought I might make a brief opening statement and then I will be happy to answer any questions which you may have. We're nearing the end of a trip which we embarked upon about ten days ago which has as its objective to help the parties move towards the early reconvening of a Geneva Conference with sufficient preparation on the substantive issues to improve the chances of success of such a meeting.

In pursuit of that goal we have travelled to six countries in the last ten days. At each stop we have explained the positions of the other parties and have presented proposals which we believe would narrow the procedural and the substantive differences. We sought the reaction of the various parties to these proposals and we have now at the end of this phase sought to set forth the basis which we believe should be the framework for a Geneva Conference.

On the positive side all parties remain united on the need for a Geneva Conference. All parties have defined in greater detail than they ever have before their positions on the key issues. There is a willingness on the part of all of the parties to examine the views of the other parties on these key issues and a willingness, at least in some cases, to reflect on these other views. These developments should develop a firmer foundation for the discussions which I hope to have with respective Foreign Ministers at the time of the UN General Assembly which will meet in New York in September.

Let me say that fundamental differences remain. The parties remain divided on key issues which must be resolved if progress is to be made towards a settlement. These involve both procedural and substantive questions.

At this point it is my hope that a Geneva Conference will be convened before the end of this year. It will take good will and a joint commitment on the part of the parties as well as intensive discussions to bring this into being. Finally, let me say that it is not our purpose to impose terms upon the parties but to assist them in reaching agreement among themselves. Now I'd be very happy to answer any questions.

**Q.** Did you mean to suggest that there is any more examination the Israelis are giving to the idea of the Palestinian homeland and/or acceptance of PLO in negotiations?

**A.** They are very clear and firm on their position with respect to a Palestinian entity. They have said that they are opposed to a Palestinian entity and have made this very very clear to me.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, have you succeeded in reaching an agreement among the Arab states and Israel to conduct proximity talks in New York next month and will this be the achievement of this trip?

A. I don't want to characterize anything as proximity talks. Let me say that I believe that each of the leaders of the countries which I have visited will send their Foreign Ministers when they are in New York. I will discuss with them issues which we have been discussing and which I hope to keep in touch with them about between now and that time.

Q. A follow up, Sir: Will you be shuttling between the Arab Foreign Ministers and the Israelis even though you may not choose to call it proximity talks?

A. I expect to go between the parties including between the Israelis and the Arab parties.

Q. The Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan said last night that Israel must not permit any foreign rule in the West Bank territory and the Gaza Strip now occupied by Israel. He specifically included Jordan as such a foreign power. This afternoon a senior advisor to the Prime Minister, Mr. Katz, said that we are not in favor of any possible governmental connections of Jordan with the West Bank territory. We are against it. And he said that Israel would not leave, would not give back any part of the West Bank. May we have your reactions to that? Do you think that is at all acceptable to the United States or to any Arab power?

A. With respect to the question of a Palestinian entity, I have indicated that the Israelis have made it very clear to us that they are opposed to a Palestinian entity. With respect to the West Bank, whether or not the Israelis are prepared to negotiate on the question of the West Bank is for the Israelis to speak to, not for me.

Q. Mr. Secretary, this afternoon, Mr. Katz also told us that if the PLO, if the Arabs insist on the PLO presence at the Geneva Conference, there will be no Geneva Conference. How do you expect to resolve that position with the position that you have heard from the Arabs so far?

A. The question of Palestinian Arab representation at the Geneva Conference remains one of the unresolved issues. This is an issue which will continue to be discussed with the various parties and I cannot predict at this point how that matter will be resolved.

Q. Would you say that there is no significant progress during the past ten days towards the basis and foundation for the Geneva Conference? Do the gaps remain as wide as ever?

A. There are wide gaps. Let me be very clear on that. I think we have made some progress in certain areas. I indicated to you the other day where I thought those narrowings of the gap were. They remain as I indicated the last time that we spoke.

Q. Mr. Secretary. The President has said the United States will open discussions with the Palestinians if they recognize Resolution 242. If the PLO in fact does that, might you conduct such discussions in New York during the round of discussions with Foreign Ministers?

A. The President has indicated that, if the Palestinians accept clearly 242 (and, just to make it clear, that includes specifically that provision of 242 that relates to the right of Israel to exist) that we will talk to the Palestinians.

Q. Mr. Secretary, you said that you had been able to narrow the gap on the question of the nature of a major peace resulting from a peace settlement. Did you narrow the gap on any other core questions while you were here in Israel?

A. Would you repeat the first part of the question? I'm sorry.

Q. ...You had been able to narrow the gap between the parties on the question of the nature of peace. Were you able to narrow the gap in Israel on the other core questions? Or on any questions?



A. In the discussions here in Israel we did not narrow the gap any further than at the time that I left.

Q. Mr. Vance, inasmuch as the co-chairman of the Geneva Conference will be represented in New York while you hold those discussions with the various Foreign Ministers, could you tell us how you might help the Soviet Union keep up with the momentum that you have been fostering in this process?

A. I expect to meet with the Ambassador from the Soviet Union when I return to Washington next week. I have asked him to meet with me. He has indicated that he will. I will give him a general fill-in with respect to what has happened on my trip to the Middle East and we will talk about how we as co-chairmen should proceed from here to continue the process of preparing ourselves for a Geneva Conference.

Q. Mr. Secretary, if the Palestinians will not recognize Resolution 242, will you take the initiative to change this resolution?

A. No.

Q. At the time of the Likud party election back in May the question was put to the Administration whether they thought it would be a setback for their plans for peace in the Middle East. The attitude then was "Let's wait and see." Now given the lack of progress at meetings here in the last two days, I wonder if you would agree with that assessment that some people had made in May that peace would be more difficult to achieve because of the election of the Begin government?

A. I don't want to make any characterizations of the political situation in any country. Let me say that we as an intermediary will continue to work between the parties. We have received cooperation in our discussions with all of the parties. I do feel the conversations that we have had have been useful and will continue to follow out that process.

Q. Mr. Secretary, before you set off on this trip, you were asked the question about the sovereignty of the West Bank area. At that time you said you did not have an answer to this question. In the light of your trip, do you have an answer?

A. You're going to have to make your question more clear.

Q. Before you left...

A. Before I left where?

Q. Before you left for this trip, before you left Washington, you were asked as to who has sovereignty over the West Bank and at that time, if I am not misquoting you, you said that this was a difficult question to which you did not have an answer...

A. I have nothing further to add at this time.

Q. Mr. Secretary. You were told that the PLO was out to make some sort of a change in its public position. Are you satisfied that they have made that change because they have announced several things or do you expect them to say something further based on what you heard in Saudi Arabia?

A. I have seen no change so far that indicates that they accept 242.

Q. Mr. Secretary, do you expect any further announcement from them based on what you heard in Saudi Arabia?

A. We shall be watching and waiting.

Q. Mr. Secretary, the question is on the PLO questions, the American government seems to be ready to talk to the PLO if they will accept 242. We have heard rather impassionately from Mr. Begin both here and in Washington that simply accepting the PLO on the basis of some words is the equivalent of the world not taking "Mein Kampf" seriously in the 1930's. Does the United States feel that the PLO is a different body than

Mr. Begin does or does it simply feel that for the sake of negotiations it's worthwhile to deal with the PLO if it takes the right negotiation step?

A. With respect to Mr. Begin's characterization of the PLO, I don't choose to comment on that one way or another. I don't think it would be appropriate for me to do so. Let me say that we have for a number of years said that we would not talk to the PLO until they change their position to recognize the right of Israel to exist. The implication of that was and remains: If they change that position and recognize the right of The State of Israel to exist, we would talk to them.

Q. You spoke about narrowing the gap. Can you give one concrete detail where the gap has been narrowed?

A. Yes. I think that in the question of the nature of peace, the gap has been narrowed.

Q. Mr. Secretary, you are near the end of your second trip to the area now and you still report that wide gaps remain between the positions on both sides. What is it that you think is going to happen between now and your meetings with the Foreign Ministers in September and even at those meetings that's going to make a Geneva Peace Conference possible this year?

A. As I have proceeded through these discussions during this last trip, we have been able to get into more detail. Much more detail on the substance of the various issues and the position therefore of the parties on these issues. In doing that we have found that in some cases what appeared to be irreconcilable differences have disappeared. My hope is that we can continue to deal more in peace treaties among the parties, that we will find it possible to further narrow these differences and isolate those remaining key issues where it is impossible to close the gap and then we will have to decide whether on that basis it is appropriate then to proceed on to Geneva—but that is up to the parties.

Q. Where were you able to narrow the gap on the nature of peace? What were you able to bring the Israelis from the Arab side which suggested that...

A. I'm not going to get into details on this. As I've indicated, I'm going to stay away from the details on this. Let me say that I have found more flexibility on the question of the nature of peace on the Arab side than I had seen before. That's all I think I ought to say.

Q. Is that true of all the Arab governments that you spoke with or just some of them?

A. Some of them.

Q. Do you think you've made any progress in persuading Mr. Begin that basically the Arabs do want to make peace and not just establish a better position for the further war?

A. I think he was very interested in the conclusion which I expressed to him that it is my belief that the Arabs really do want to make peace and I believe that Mr. Begin wants to make peace as well. The problem however is accepting the good-will on the part of all the parties wanting to get to a peaceful solution. How do you overcome the problems that remain — That's a tough problem that's going to take time.

Q. Do you think you made progress in persuading them to listen to that goodwill on the Arab side?

A. I hope so and I believe that I may have.

Q. One of the problems in the Middle East is that it is up to the parties themselves to resolve this problem left to their own devices. They've had four wars so far. If the United States clearly has interests in this area, at what point might the United States be prepared to act solely in its own interests?

A. I don't want to speculate with respect to the future. I have said to you and I repeat again that we are now making suggestions of our own views in respect to each of the par-

ties and soliciting their reaction to those suggestions which we are making. Some of those suggestions have met with favor, others have, as you might expect, been turned down and we will continue to make suggestions of our own. That's as far as I want to go at this point.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary. In the Arab world we were told by some of the leaders there that they feel it is only worthwhile to go to a Geneva Conference if in advance they can have some assurance that the general principles underlying a settlement, a comprehensive settlement, are within the range of possibility at such a conference. Do you agree with that point of view? Do you think it's one that is valid and do you feel that such a statement of general principles in advance of Geneva is a possibility?

**A.** I have been discussing with the parties, not only including the Arab parties, but the Israelis as well, general principles that might govern a Geneva Conference and thus operate as a framework. I find agreement among them on some of these principles. I find differences of wording on others and on one such as the Palestinian entity I find a sharp, almost total, division. But I must say that I do find some agreement and some agreement except for language on others.

**Q.** Might I just follow that, let's suggest that you may have drawn up a United States idea of what general principles may be for their consideration. Have you done so?

**A.** I have discussed with them our suggestions as to what the general principles might be.

**Q.** Mr. Secretary, getting back to the proximity talks, are you satisfied that the Israelis... (Vance — You keep calling them proximity talks...)

**Q.** Well, because I realize the reason you choose not to... Mr. Secretary, are you satisfied that during these proximity talks the Israelis will continue their conversations with you even though the United States at that point may be in discussion with the PLO?

**A.** I have considered that.

**Q.** Have you received assurances from the Israelis that they will continue talks even though the U.S. may at that time be talking to the PLO?

**A.** That specific question has not been raised between the Israelis and ourselves. They have indicated that their Foreign Minister will be in New York at that time — I hope that he would meet with me.

**Q.** Did you expect to make more progress on this trip, do you regret not having made more progress on this trip?

**A.** You've asked me that same question before on other trips.

**Q.** It's still valid. (Several voices interrupt. Wait, wait, can we get a reply?)

**A.** You want me to answer it. I'll answer his question.

**Q.** The Israelis agree that talks in New York should be about substantive matters also, not only about procedural matters.

**A.** Let me answer that Roy, and I'll come back to your question. Yes, they clearly should be about substantive matters. Now...

**Q.** Do the Israelis agree to that?

**A.** Yes. Now, your question, Roy, was do I feel that I would like to have made more progress. The answer is yes. I would like to have made more progress. But I feel that these visits to the various countries have been useful, even though sharp differences remain between the parties.

**Q.** You say America is not initiating any change in 242? Would America veto any attempt to either change 242 or bring in an addendum to 242? Or could a situation arise where America would support moves to change 242?

A. Let me say, I hope there will be no attempt to amend 242.

Q. But will you veto any attempt to change 242?

A. When the time comes, we'll deal with that question. We might.

Q. Excuse me, perhaps I misunderstand, but I thought you had rather flatly not too long ago, perhaps a day or two ago, that the United States opposes any change in 242.

A. We do.

Q. Well then why would you simply discourage it? Why wouldn't you simply stop it from happening?

A. I hope that it will not come. And I say I hope it'll never even come to the U.N.

Q. Mr. Secretary, these fundamental differences, can't they be bridged? And if you cannot go to a Geneva Conference and really make progress on the comprehensive settlement which you and President Carter have spoken about, do you think the American taxpayers and Congress will continue to subsidize with very large sums the economies of both Israel and several of the Arab countries, and to provide armaments to both Israel and several of the Arab countries, knowing the inevitable fact of a likely war ahead?

A. Mr. Oberdorfer, our commitment to the security of Israel is clear and unequivocal and we will continue to provide to Israel what is necessary to preserve its security.

Press. Thank you Mr. Secretary.

A. Thank you very much.

### **34. Statement by White House spokesman on Secretary Vance's trip, 14 August 1977.**

*The significant part of the statement, issued in Washington after Mr. Vance reported to President Carter on his Middle East trip, was the fact that the major differences between Israel and the Arab states on the Palestinian issue, secure and recognized borders remain, but that the U.S. would continue its efforts to bring together the parties for a Geneva conference. The statement stressed the intention of the U.S. to remain in close touch with the Soviet Union as co-chairman of the Geneva conference. This close cooperation would result on 1 October in the joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. statement on the Middle East. Text of White House statement:*

Secretary Vance reported today to the President on his discussions in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Israel, which continued the Administration's sustained search for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. He also reported on the talks held in London concerning Southern Africa.

Secretary Vance held in-depth discussions on all issues both substantive and procedural and with each of the leaders he met. He suggested a number of principles which might guide the negotiations and discussed with the parties their proposals on how to narrow the remaining differences. Progress was made in some areas, particularly in reaffirming Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations and in moving closer to a common concept of the mutual obligations of peace although much remains to be accomplished in this respect. Major differences between Arabs and Israelis remain on how Palestinian views can best be represented in negotiations but also on the definition of secure and recognized borders and the nature of a Palestinian settlement.

Difficult choices requiring courageous leadership face all parties in the future. President Carter and the Secretary believe that all of the leaders desire peace and are aware of the dangers of stalemate.

The President emphasized the importance of making progress in the coming months building on the foundations already laid. Each of the parties has been asked to provide more detailed expressions of their positions on order to accelerate the reconvening of a well prepared Geneva Conference. We remain hopeful that the conference can be reconvened this fall. In September the Secretary of State will meet in the United States with their Foreign Ministers for intensive talks to continue those held during this trip. The President will also meet with the Foreign Ministers during their upcoming visits to the United States.

The President and the Secretary of State remain determined to do all that is possible to bring about a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. With the approval of all concerned the United States will use its influence, offer its advice, volunteer its suggestions and work to bring the parties into fruitful negotiations. The United States will also stay in close touch with the Soviet Union as Co-chairman of the Geneva Conference. Secretary Vance will meet later this week with Ambassador Dobrynin to discuss his recent Middle East trip and to hear the latest Soviet views.

### **35. Press Conferences with President Carter, 23 and 26 August 1977.**

*The covert diplomatic activity slowed down considerably after the Vance visit to the Middle East. It was assumed that the next phase would be meetings in New York between the Foreign Ministers of Israel and some of the Arab states in preparation for a renewed Geneva Conference. On its part, Israel began to engage in various initiatives designed to bring about face to face meetings with Arab leaders. In the last week of August Prime Minister Begin was in Bucharest on state visit to Rumania. Following are excerpts from two press conferences given by President Carter in which he spoke of progress in the Middle East.*

#### *23 August*

**Q.** Mr. President, twice in recent weeks the United States has said that Israel is in violation of international law in terms of the West Bank settlements, which some view as an annexation plan. My question is: What does the United States plan to do to protect the rights of the people in the occupied lands?

**The President:** Well, it has been the position of our own government long before I was elected President that the West Bank territory, the Gaza Strip, areas of the Golan Heights, the Sinai region, the occupied territories in other words, were not a part of Israel. Our government has expressed on several occasions, the Presidents, our Ambassadors to the United Nations and otherwise, that the settlement of Israeli citizens in some of these areas was in violation of the Geneva Convention and that, therefore, the settlements were illegal.

We have private assurance and there have been public statements made by Mr. Begin that these settlements are not intended to show that Israel was to occupy these territories permanently; that the final boundaries to be established through mutual agreement bet-

ween Israel and the Arab countries was to be decided without prior commitment, and negotiations would include these areas.

So at this time our pointing out to Israel that these three settlements that were just established are illegal, because they were made on occupied territory, is the extent of our intention.

I concur with the statement that was made by Secretary Vance at the State department that this kind of action on the part of Israel, when we are trying to put together a Middle Eastern conference leading to a permanent peace, creates an unnecessary obstacle to peace. I believe that our opinion is shared by the overwhelming number of nations in the world, but we don't intend to go further than our caution to Israel, our open expression of our own concern and the identification of these settlements as being illegal.

**Q.** But you don't feel that you have any leverage at all to move in any direction in terms of military aid to Israel to keep her from violating —

**The President:** Obviously, we could exert pressure on Israel in other ways, but I have no intention to do so.

## *26 August*

We have been quite active in the Middle Eastern negotiations, and I think that it is completely accurate and a very cautious thing to say that Cy Vance's last trip to the Middle East was very successful, certainly compared to the news reports from there.

We found a much more compatible relationship among the Arab leaders, a much more flexible attitude on their part. I think we still have a chance for progress there.

Obviously, the chances are directly determined by the attitude of the parties involved. Although we have a very major interest in the Middle East, we are not just idle bystanders. We don't play a narrowly defined negotiating or intermediary role, but we are not trying to impose an American or United States settlement upon the other nations involved.

We will be aggressive. But I have to say that there is going to be a great deal of disillusionment on our part in the Middle East and around the world if some progress is not demonstrated within this year.

I doubt that our government could continue to spend as much time and effort on my part, the State department and all the other agencies involved, on a continuing basis, unless it is obvious to us that all the parties involved genuinely want a comprehensive settlement.

**Q.** You said there will be great disillusionment if progress toward a Middle East peace settlement isn't achieved by the end of the year. What will the United States do next?

**The President:** Do next?

**Q.** If there isn't progress, and if talks between Vance and the Middle East Foreign Ministers next month do not accomplish anything.

**The President:** Let me say our determination to bring about progress in the Middle East is as fervent as it has been. We are not going to slacken our effort. I am convinced that the congress and the American people can have their commitment to a peaceful settlement aroused even more than has been the case in the past. We have found a growing impatience among the other nations of the world. In the European community for instance, with a lack of progress. So I think that any nation in the Middle East that proved to be intransigent or an obstacle to progress would suffer at least to some degree the condemnation of the rest of the world. That is a persuasion in itself.

The three basic problems have been obvious for decades. They are being addressed in detail now in a much more constructive way than seven or eight months ago when I came

into office. Territorial boundaries and defensible borders combined, the Palestinian refugee question, and a recognition by the Arab countries that Israel is there, that it has a right to exist, to exist in peace and to be accepted as an equal.

I think we have made progress on all three of those basic areas. My hope is that we can bring the parties to Geneva for discussions under the aegis of ourselves and the Soviet Union and then let the world and the participating negotiators themselves realize that it is going to be a long, tedious process.

There is no instant solution. Disagreements that have existed in some cases 2000 years can't be resolved overnight. But I think with that sort of demonstration on their part, then our commitment will continue to be very dedicated and very constant.

**36. Statement issued after the meeting of the Palestinian Central Council, Damascus, 25 and 26 August 1977.**

*In view of the various rumors that were circulating in the Middle East and the western capitals about the "moderation" of the PLO, that organization decided to refute all such allegations. Meeting in Damascus, its Central Council issued a statement saying that there was no change in its policy of establishing an independent state on what it called "its national soil" which in the PLO jargon meant also the area of the State of Israel. The statement left no doubt as to the intentions of the PLO. Text:*

Condemnation of all the United States and Zionist maneuvers ignoring the right of our people to return, to self determination, to establish an independent state on its national soil and to gather under the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

On this basis the council reiterates its rejection of any attempt, aimed at liquidating the resolutions of the Palestinian National Council and to change the Arab attitude as decided during the Arab summit conferences of Rabat and Cairo, as far as the rights of our people and their representation commitment to the Palestinian cause is concerned.

The Central Council has discussed the situation in occupied Palestine and warns those cowards and those suspected of cooperating with the plans of the Zionist enemy. The Council also highly praises the heroic and struggle role of the masses of our people in the occupied territories and its national leaderships in Galilee, the West Bank and Gaza and the loyalty of these masses to the PLO. The Council also insisted on the importance of increasing our continuous armed struggle against Zionist occupation.

**37. Letter from Ambassador Herzog to Secretary General Waldheim on PLO Central Council resolutions, 31 August 1977.**

*In his letter, Ambassador Herzog sought to place in proper perspective the Damascus resolutions and their declared aim of destroying the State of Israel. Mr. Herzog cited from the Palestinian National Covenant, from the resolutions of the National Council of the*

*PLO that met in Cairo in March 1977 and from the Damascus resolutions, to explain the true goals of the PLO and to refute any notion that there has been moderation in its stand and thus the PLO could be considered a party to possible negotiations on the Middle East settlement. Text:*

His Excellency,  
Dr. Kurt Waldheim  
The Secretary General  
Excellency.

The Central Council of the PLO met in Damascus on 25 and 26 August 1977, and once again gave expression to its record of intransigence, inherent negativism, and its declared aim of destroying the State of Israel.

This is the burden of the statement issued at the end of the Central Council meeting, an unofficial translation of which is attached. It begins by reaffirming all the resolutions previously adopted by the PLO's highest body, the National Council. It scorns any attempts to attitude towards Israel, as set out in the "Palestinian Charter" article 19 of which claims that the establishment of the State of Israel is fundamentally null and void, and article 15 of which asserts that it is a "national duty" to purge Palestine of the "Zionist presence" (or, in plain language, to purge Palestine of the State of Israel).

The second point in the statement reiterates the PLO's complete rejection of Security Council Resolution 242, as authoritatively determined in the 15-point programme adopted by the National Council at its 13th session in Cairo from 12 to 20 March of this year. The third point calls for an increase in the armed struggle against Israel, and threatens those Arabs in the territories administered by Israel since 1967 who, now wholly disillusioned with the PLO and its murderous activities, are actively contemplating the possibility of negotiating their own future with Israel. Moreover, it refers to areas within Israel, such as the Galilee, as "occupied territories", thereby confirming the PLO's repeated designs on Israel as a whole.

The Central Council is the intermediate body in the PLO's political hierarchy, ranking above the executive, but subordinate to the National Council — and the absolute opposition of both those bodies to the existence of Israel is well documented. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the Central Council has not moderated its position in any way whatsoever, despite the unfounded and optimistic assessments of certain observers who predicted some unspecified form of PLO acceptance of Security Council Resolution 242, the only basis for the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East agreed to by Israel and the neighbouring Arab states.

Lest there be any doubts about the National Council's position, as reaffirmed in the Central Council statement, a translation of the 15-point programme of March 1977 is also attached. Significantly, it opened by recalling the "Palestinian national covenant". It rejected Security Council Resolution 242 out of hand, and pledged the PLO to pursue the armed struggle and also all forms of political and mass struggle. It forswore any peace with, or recognition of Israel, and presumed to claim a right to invalidate any settlement affecting the Palestinians reached without the PLO.

I wish to emphasize that the statement issued by the Central Council, taken together with the recent indiscriminate outrages against civilians by the PLO demonstrate yet again that that grouping of Arab terrorists cannot be a partner to any steps leading to a settle-



ment of the Arab-Israel conflict, because of its essentially vicious nature and its remorseless commitment, explicitly declared, to the destruction of the State of Israel.

I have the honour to request that this letter and its attachments be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 31 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Chaim Herzog  
Permanent representative of Israel to the United Nations

### **38. Joint statement Begin-Manescu, Bucharest, 30 August 1977.**

*At the invitation of Prime Minister Manea Manescu, Mr. Begin spent six days in Rumania (25-30 August) in talks with the leaders of that country, including long sessions with President Nicolae Ceausescu. The talks focused on ways to get peace talks between Israel and Egypt going. Mr Begin explained the position of Israel and stressed its readiness to make concessions in return for a true peace. The Rumanian President later met with President Sadat and conveyed the Israeli thinking to him. Both Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat later credited President Ceausescu with playing a vital role in making the Sadat visit to Jerusalem possible. Text of the statement follows:*

At the invitation of Comrade Manea Manescu, Prime Minister of the Rumanian government, Menahem Begin, Prime Minister of the State of Israel paid an official visit to the Socialist Republic of Rumania from 25 to 30 August 1977. During the visit, the Israeli Prime Minister was accompanied by Mrs. Aliza Begin, as well as by Ephraim Evron, Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Yehiel Kadishai, Director of the office of the Prime Minister and by other officials.

Comrade Nicolae Ceausescu, President of the Socialist Republic of Rumania, received the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Mr. Menahem Begin, with whom he had talks on some aspects of the bilateral relations, as well as some present day international problems, especially with regard to the settlement of the conflictual situation in the Middle East.

Expressing their known points of view, the two sides underlined the necessity of the establishment as soon as possible for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Both sides considered that although there were differences of opinions concerning the ways towards the settlement of the situation in the Middle East, it was essential to increase the efforts aiming at the instauration of a fair and durable peace in this area. Those differences of views in this matter should not affect the friendly relations between the two peoples.

Attending these talks were, on the Rumanian side, Comrades Manea Manescu, Prime Minister of the Rumanian Government, and Gheorghe Macovescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and on the Israeli side Ephraim Evron, Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also present were Ion Covaci, Ambassador of Rumania to the State of Israel, and Shamai Kahana, Ambassador of Israel to Rumania.

The Prime Minister of the Rumanian government, Comrade Manea Manescu, and the

Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Menahem Begin, held official talks which took place in a relaxed atmosphere of complete sincerity. During these talks a wide exchange of information was carried out on the present-day preoccupations of the two countries in the economic, social and political fields. The Rumanian and Israeli Prime Ministers also had prospects of bilateral relations in various fields of common interest as well as on some international issues.

It was agreed that further action should be taken for the development of relations on the bilateral and international levels, in fields of common interest.

The Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Menahem Begin, as well as the persons accompanying him visited social and cultural objectives in Bucharest and in the Brasov county. The Israel Prime Minister laid a wreath at the monument of the heroes of the struggle for the freedom of the people and homeland for socialism. The Prime Minister of the Rumanian government gave an official dinner in honour of the Prime Minister of the State of Israel.

At the conclusion of the visit, the Prime Minister Menahem Begin expressed sincere thanks to the Prime Minister Manea Manescu and to the Rumanian government for the reception afforded him during his official visit to Rumania.

The Prime Minister of the State of Israel invited the Prime Minister of the Rumanian government to pay an official visit to Israel. The invitation was accepted and the date of the visit is to be fixed subsequently through diplomatic channels.

### **39. Press Conference with Prime Minister Begin upon his return from Bucharest, 30 August 1977.**

*In addition to the joint statement issued prior to Mr. Begin's departure from Bucharest, the Prime Minister elaborated on some of the topics under discussion during his meetings with the leaders of Rumania, whom he praised. He also touched upon the situation of the Rumanian Jewish community, members of which he met during his visit to the synagogue in the Rumanian capital. The main pointers from the press conference at Ben-Gurion airport follow:*

The visit was an important and an exciting one. I had talks with the President of Romania, Mr. Nicolae Ceaucescu, and with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Macovescu.

My two talks with the President extended over more than eight hours.

Talks with the Prime Minister lasted for over four hours. While the Premier raised mostly economic subjects, my talks with the President were mostly on political matters.

Prime Minister Manescu described to the Israeli Delegation Romania's progress since the Second World War. Indeed a most impressive array of facts and figures. Romania, which we remember as a poor agricultural country, underwent a spectacular process of industrialization, and continues to advance socially and economically.

With the Prime Minister we talked of bilateral affairs and agreed that Israel and Romania would continue and intensify their economic cooperation. Both countries will make special efforts to increase the mutual exchange of goods.

In November, my colleague the Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism will visit

Romania. Prior to this visit, both sides will prepare official plans for the expansion of exports, and I hope that the Minister of Industry will be able to sign official agreements in the course of his visit to Bucarest.

The talks with President Ceaucescu were most meaningful. Raising as they did all the political problems engaging our region. In the course of these talks I came to appreciate the President, Mr. Ceaucescu, as a personality worthy of general esteem. He is a man who suffered and struggled, emerging from his suffering and struggles to his august position. There was full mutual attention to the positions as they were formulated.

This morning, a joint statement was published despite some whispering that there would be no statement. The statement contains, in addition to a description of the visit, three main points:

1. Efforts must be made to bring about peace in the Middle East.
2. There exist differences of opinion between the Romanian and the Israeli Government. Not only did we not intend to deny the existence of these differences — we emphasised (the fact) that there exist differences of opinion regarding the roads towards the peacemaking process. But the joint statement notes that these differences of opinion will not affect the amicable relations between the two countries, Romania and Israel.
3. The promised reciprocal visit of the Prime Minister of Romania in Israel. It was agreed that the Prime Minister and Mrs. Manescu will be our guests for a return visit to Israel. The date for their visit will be fixed through diplomatic channels.

On my return home, I wish to thank the President of Romania, its Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and all members of the cabinet, as well as the Romanian people, for the marvellous hospitality my wife, my colleagues and I enjoyed throughout the five days we spent in Romania.

The visit was a moving one, as I have noted. I refer to the meeting with the remnants of the Romanian Jewish Community in fact with the remnants of East European Jewry in general. We came to the synagogue on Friday evening, and there we saw the remnants of the glorious Jewish Community.

Before World War II there were a million Jews in Romania, but only 450,000 survived. Even in 1944 the arch-murderer Eichmann managed to deport from Transylvania, which is now part of Romania hundreds of thousands of Jews and ship them to Auschwitz. This entire tragedy stood before my eyes when I saw the worshippers in the synagogue. The old people, the women and the youngsters. The youngsters sang for us songs of Zion and we experienced profound emotion.

We must not forget that 38 years have passed since the outbreak of the war and the onset of the Holocaust, and this was the first time — after a span of a generation or more that I had seen the remnants of East European Jewry.

The next day we went to the synagogue again — all the members of the entourage and myself, and again we met with the wonderful Jews who had survived. But in my mind's eye I saw also the thousands of Jews with whom I came too what was the Romanian border and who, on account of the intervention of the British Ambassador in Bucharest, were prevented from transiting to Constanza and from there to Israel. I am certain that the citizens of Israel will understand why we were all so moved and as Mr. Evron, the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry and one of those who accompanied me on this visit said on behalf of us all as we were sitting in the synagogue: "We were like dreamers." Both because of the pain over those who are no longer alive and because of our encounter with those who still are — and they are loyal dedicated Jews who love Eretz Yisrael and are aware of what is happening in it.

Therefore, to sum up my opening remarks: The visit was important. It was interesting and it was very moving.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to ask you two questions: One concerns the banquet with the Romanian Prime Minister — and this is perhaps one of the most interesting items of the visit: He took advantage of the opportunity to stress his government's differences with Israel, and this compelled you to alter your own speech.

What was the explanation for this, and in your talks were you able to receive any explanation for it or even to raise the subject?

**A.** I think that actually it was merely an accident. I was not informed of the speech before the festive State banquet in the government building, but the English translation of the speech was on the table in front of me.

I began to read it before the Prime Minister began to speak — in the very last moments before Mr. Manescu rose to deliver his address.

When I read the speech I informed him at once that to my speech, which I had dictated on the plane en route to Bucharest and had submitted to the Romanian government at its request — that to this speech I would add a few things orally, because I had found in the Romanian Prime Minister's speech three items to which it was necessary to reply, and without delay. Namely: 1) Israel was to withdraw to the lines of June 4. 2) A so-called Palestinian State was to be set up and 3) Negotiations were to be conducted with the Arab states, including the organisation known as the PLO.

As for the second part, it was improvised: With reference to withdrawal I said that the Six Day War was a defensive war in the most exalted sense of the term, and according to international law and international practice — if a war was one in which a nation exercises its natural right of self defence, territorial changes are included in the peace treaty. What is the Soviet Union doing in Koenigsburg, which it now calls Kaliningrad and has annexed to itself?

I must emphasise that we have no quarrel with the fact that the Soviet Union is in Eastern Prussia. The war between Germany and the USSR was a defensive war from the standpoint of Soviet Russia and a war of aggression from that of Germany and in the wake of Germany's war of aggression territorial changes came about in Europe. The Soviet Union dominates Eastern Prussia and Poland has reached the two rivers — the Oder and the Neisse. I think this is just, because from the standpoint of the nations that were attacked — they defended themselves: and in the wake of this defensive war basic territorial changes came about. I could also have told them that the same rule should apply to us as well. Because the Six Day War was a defensive war from Israel's standpoint and a war of aggression from the standpoint of the Arabs.

As for the participation of the PLO — I explained what it is this organisation wants. And I said it before the decision of the PLO Council in Damascus. But we were able to assume that this would indeed be the case and one does not have to be a prophet to know that the organization would not alter its approach to Resolution 242 nor to the Palestinian covenant and that it would continue to speak of the State of Israel as if it doesn't exist. Therefore I was able to tell the Prime Minister with all due respect, that as far as Israel was concerned it was inconceivable that that organisation, the PLO, would take part with Israel in any sort of negotiations.

Thus there were differences of opinion between the Romanian Prime Minister and myself against this background. But the atmosphere between us remained friendly. We made our positions clear, as we did in our talks with the President, and we stated frankly

that there were differences between us and they still remained. However we shall maintain friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries, even though these differences exist.

I heard that someone has written that I received rather a cold reception in Romania. If this were the case I would not conceal it from you. The fact is, though, there was nothing to conceal. After all, this was my first visit to Romania in 39 years. But the truth is that we were received very warmly, as the correspondents who were with us will attest. If anybody says that in Moscow we would not have been received more coldly. I can only hope that we will be received in Moscow with the same warmth as we were in Romania.

#### **40. Statement to the Knesset by Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel's foreign policy, 1 September 1977.**

*The speech was devoted mainly to a summary of the Israeli, Arab and U.S. positions on the various elements that affect the Middle East crisis. Mr. Dayan stressed the fact that while Israel has to make peace with the Arab states and not with the United States, that power must play a central role in any settlement because of its special relationship with Israel and its growing friendly ties with more Arab states, a process that was accelerated since the Yom Kippur War. Mr. Dayan also elaborated the two issues on which there were Israeli-American disagreements, settlements and PLO role in the peacemaking process. Finally Mr. Dayan outlined the issues that will be discussed in his forthcoming trip to the U.S. Text:*

Mr. Speaker, Members of The Knesset,

I do not propose this time to deliver a comprehensive review of foreign policy. I wish to review only one issue, the central issue of our diplomatic activity — the peace negotiations. Technically — and I stress technically, and not in essence — the negotiating process is proceeding apace. This process commenced with the meetings the U.S. President held — at his initiative — with the Arab heads of state and with both the former and the incumbent Prime Minister of Israel. Thereafter, the U.S. Secretary of State visited the Arab states and Israel, and now we face the next round — the indirect talks between the Foreign Ministers, to be held in Washington with effect from the second half of September.

The Arab positions, as reported to us by the Secretary of State and in accordance with the Arab leaders' public pronouncements, are in the main:

(A) First, on the territorial issue — insistence on our total withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967 and return of the vacated territories to the Arab states. This entails, inter alia, handing over the Gaza Strip to Egyptian authority and East Jerusalem — including Mount Scopus and the Old City's Jewish Quarter — to Jordanian authority.

(B) Establishment of a Palestinian Arab state — or, in other words, granting the right of self-determination to the Palestinian Arabs, whose representative is the P.L.O. — ergo, the P.L.O. representation, with powers similar to those of other states, is to be allowed to participate in the Geneva Conference.

(C) On the issue of peace — only one Arab state announced its readiness, in the advent of peace, to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. The other Arab states contend that a

peace treaty does not obligate them to establish diplomatic and commercial relations with Israel.

(D) On the refugee resettlement issue — over and above the P.L.O., the Syrian President, too, in his public pronouncements, insists that even after establishment of a Palestinian State in the Gaza Strip and in Judea and Samaria, the right should be reserved for the refugees to return to their homes and lands located in Israel — in addition to establishment of a Palestinian State.

As for the U.S. position — this is known to the members of the house, its main points being:

(A) Israeli withdrawal to the boundaries of 4 June 1967, with minor adjustments to be made by mutual agreement.

(B) Giving the Palestinian Arabs the right to self-determination.

(C) Peace that includes diplomatic ties and commercial relations.

This American position was determined during the term of office of the previous Israel government, and has not changed since — neither for better nor for worse.

Members of The Knesset.

I neither dwelt at length nor went into detail on these matters, since they are well-known. All the same, I should like to remark on two points of dispute that have cropped up between the U.S. and ourselves at this juncture, even before negotiations have begun with the Arabs on peace treaties.

The first is on the settlement issue:

The U.S. position regarding the settlements is that settling Israeli citizens in the administered areas is in contradiction to the Geneva Convention, hence the settlements are not legal, and that this act also creates an obstacle to peace or to peace negotiations.

The Israel government's position on the subject — which is a continuation of the line adopted by all Israel governments since 1967 — is that Israel does not and cannot accept the assertion that Jews' settlement in Eretz Yisrael is illegal. The government reiterated that such settlement does not — nor shall — constitute, in any sense, an obstacle to negotiations for peace treaties.

The Arabs' position — and this is also the position of the United States and of the rest of the nations of the world, which emulate the U.S. — does not, on this matter of settlements, distinguish between one region and another, viewing settlement on the Golan Heights as violation of international law and an obstacle to peace just like (settlement) in Judea and Samaria. Let the honourable members take note: I should like Mapam in particular to take note: According to "Al Hamishmar," Mapam adopted a resolution stating that "The cabinet's decision to establish three civilian settlement-points in Judea and Samaria places an obstacle on the road to political negotiations." I want to reiterate that not only the Arabs' stand, but also that of the United States, is that settlements in the administered areas — regardless of whether on the Golan Heights, in Sinai or in Judea and Samaria — are illegal and constitute an obstacle to peace. The United States makes no distinction in this matter between Judea and Samaria and the Golan Heights.

The second sphere in which there are differences of opinion between ourselves and the Americans is that of U.S. recognition of the P.L.O. as a partner for dialogue with the U.S. There has of late been a change for the worse in the position of the U.S. on this issue, as compared with its stand some time ago. The present position is that if the P.L.O. accepts Resolution 242 — albeit with a reservation to the effect that Resolution 242 should refer to the Palestinians as a people entitled to a homeland, and not as refugees — if the P.L.O. ac-

cepts the resolution with that proviso tagged on, the United States would be ready to maintain contact and dialogue with it. Though the U.S. has not told us, I believe it is correct to say that the P.L.O. — if not as an independent body then at least as a partner (to another delegation) — participate in one of the delegations to the Geneva Conference or in a unified Arab delegation to Geneva.

I do not think that the current dealing with this subject of the P.L.O.'s legitimation or legalization for the purpose of dialogue between it and the U.S., has any purpose other than the linking and inclusion, in one form or another, of the P.L.O. in peace negotiations. The stand of the government of Israel vis-a-vis the P.L.O. is clear and explicit. We oppose both U.S. dialogue with the P.L.O. and that organization's participation in the peace conference, and this for two reasons: First, its murderous essence and nature and its rejection of Israel's very existence. Second: The Geneva Conference is one conducted between states and its objective is to bring about the signing of peace treaties between States and not with any organization which is not a state.

I should like to add a few remarks at this point. The U.S. position vis-a-vis the state, homeland nor self-determination — different expressions designed for the Palestinian Arabs — is that that same entity which we shall call, in plain language, "The Palestinian State", should be connected with Jordan. But that position and that assumption utterly contradict the other, the second, tendency of the United States to present the P.L.O. as representing the Palestinian state — a conception by which the P.L.O. might head the Palestinian state.

First of all, as regards Jordan: There might one day be a different regime in Jordan, there might one day be a revolution in Jordan — with the P.L.O. then taking over Jordan and the situation being different. But the present Jordanian regime totally rejects any link with the P.L.O. That regime holds no dialogue with the P.L.O., places no faith in it, and regards it as a subversive element against the regime: Jordan is not ready to maintain any connection with a Palestinian state — should such a state be established in the West Bank — if it is headed by the P.L.O. Hence, these two views cannot be reconciled: One cannot want to see a connection between Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip and Jordan, and at the same time want to see the P.L.O. heading that West Bank-Gaza Strip entity, heading those Palestinian Arabs.

These two contingencies are impossible under the present Jordanian regime, and anyone who wants proof need only look at what is happening at this very time. When the King of Jordan invited the Mayors of Nablus, Hebron, Jenin and Ramallah to pay a courtesy visit to Jordan to bring their greetings on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the regime in Jordan, the four Mayors — of Nablus, Hebron, Tulkarm and Ramallah — refused to go to Jordan: Every one of those Mayors is a Jordanian citizen, and representatives of their towns are members of the Parliament in Amman. They would not have refused had it not been for the tendency to place the P.L.O. at the head of the Arabs of these areas. And the instructions they received to refuse the invitation — and it was an insult to refuse the King's request — came from the P.L.O.

The American trend from the time of the Rabat Conference, of legitimizing and raising up the P.L.O. as representative of the Palestinian Arabs, totally contradicts the line which sees a link between the Jordanian government and the Palestinian Arabs who are residents of Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

In connection with the American stand, I should like to draw the attention of the House to one further matter. In the course of the ongoing public discussion in Israel — in the

press and in various political parties — there have been from time to time talk and suggestions concerning American guarantees for our security, as part of a peace settlement between ourselves and the Arab states. Well — neither in any American initiative nor in their replies to our queries have we, in my opinion, found any basis whatsoever upon which to build our security in such a context. In my view, we have heard nothing of the sort, nor do I see any basis for our security which could reply on any serious, fundamental American tendency or readiness — operationally and concretely with its own forces — to guarantee Israel's security as part of the vaunted settlement. The United States would not refuse and would not hold back from giving guarantees, along with other states — its position is very similar to that of the USSR — if requested by all the parties to append its signature to a peace agreement after it has been attained. But it is a very far cry from that, to regarding this as a concrete-operative element upon which we can rely as one of the security components.

And, finally, I should like to present Israel's position, in general lines, anticipatory to the talks to be held in Washington. Israel's proposals and aims vis-a-vis the issues to be discussed in Washington — on the substantive, not the procedural, issues — are divided into two sections: The first is a draft text for a full peace treaty, in all its articles. The second indicates our approach vis-a-vis discussion and negotiation on the various issues. The second section is subdivided into two components: First, a presentation of the questions involved in a peace agreement between ourselves and each of our neighbours, such as: Israel's security, guaranteeing freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Eilat and in the Suez Canal, expression given to Israel's national and historic affinity to Judea and Samaria, securing of the Jordan river sources in the north, and other topics of like nature. That is: Presentation of the questions which we believe we must contend with when we are to arrive at a peace agreement between ourselves and each of the neighbouring Arab states.

The second element in this approach is our stand and our proposals for resolving these questions. A third component is the principle that the negotiations be conducted without prior conditions. This principle says not only that neither side obligates the other to agree in advance to any condition whatsoever, but also that all issues and areas are open to negotiation, and that we shall be totally open and sincere in listening to, discussing and examining the proposals of the other parties. To illustrate this: We believe that the settlement concerning Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip should be based on our living together with the Palestinian Arabs in these areas, and not on partition of the territory. But should the Arabs propose partitioning these territories between ourselves and them, we would discuss and examine their proposal and afterwards conclude whether we were ready to agree to their proposals or not.

In connection with this example, I should like to tell the Members of the House that we have re-examined the positions of Jordan, of the Palestinian Arabs and of the United States, and we have found no inclination on the part of any of them for a solution based on the partition of Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip between ourselves and them. We have found no hint of this on the part of Jordan, of the Americans or of any of the Arab states.

I should like to propose to the factions and the parties that think otherwise, that if they find any indication at all of such readiness on the part of the Arabs, they raise the matter before the public, and then we shall know what the debate is about: About things that exist or things that do not exist.

In conclusion, I want to say that while there is of course no telling if we shall succeed in



reaching an agreement with the Arabs, we must nonetheless make a supreme effort to attain that goal. There is no need to enlarge on the overriding need for its attainment. The entire nation accepts that attainment of true peace with our neighbours is the cardinal objective of our policy. However, in this connection I should like to underscore four facts due to which, I believe, the prospects for reaching a settlement in this period are better than those that existed in the past:

(A) The increased influence of the United States on the Arab countries, and their reduced dependence — particularly that of Egypt — on the Soviet Union.

(B) The Arab leaders' readiness in principle to terminate the state of war with Israel. I have never suggested, and do not now suggest, that Israel relax its alertness and its military and political preparations and in the eventuality that the Arab states — headed by Egypt — launch a war against us. We must view that possibility as a real one at all times, and particularly if the peace talks reach a dead end. Nonetheless, we must not ignore the difference between Nasser's policy — a policy of "What was taken by force shall be restored by force," and of "No negotiations with, no recognition of and no peace with Israel" — and that of Sadat, who seeks to attain his goals by political means and declares publicly his readiness to accept Israel.

I do not think we should treat his words as deception and fraud. I do not think so. We must try to put those declarations to the test of reality while, as noted, at the same time taking into account the possibility that Egypt will — Sadat's statements notwithstanding — launch war on us.

(C) The third fact is our military and civilian control of the administered areas. Not even the Yom Kippur war, with all its difficulties, led to a change in that situation. We can, therefore, conduct peace negotiations without requiring any Arab territorial concessions whatsoever. We are in a position to give territories without asking for others in exchange for them.

(D) And lastly, the way of life of "alongside one another" which has prevailed for ten years now between ourselves and the Arabs in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, in the Gaza Strip and in Sinai. The present way of life is not the ideal one — though it should not be viewed as the final aim in this regard, either — but so long as we do not arrive at a better arrangement we will be able to continue with it, and we — and our neighbours — must be aware of this.

Members of the Knesset,

These are the observations I have found proper to bring before you at the opening of this debate. I presume that there will be place for further debate at the next session of the Knesset, following the talks to be held in Washington.

#### **41. Interview with Prime Minister Begin on Israel Defence Forces Radio, 6 September 1977.**

*In a far ranging interview, most of it devoted to foreign policy issues, Mr Begin discussed relations between Israel and the U.S. and various European nations; he also reviewed his talks with President Carter and the results of his visit to Rumania, relations with South Africa and France and also touched upon domestic issues. Text:*

**Q.** The Government is preparing, according to the press, a draft treaty of peace. Can you give us the principles of the treaty?

**A.** I must correct the question. The Government has already prepared the draft of a peace treaty, and the Foreign Minister, when he is in the United States in two weeks' time, will discuss the content of this peace treaty with the Secretary of State. We have, indeed, prepared, for the first time since the establishment of the State, a peace treaty between ourselves and Egypt, and its content will also apply to Jordan and Syria and, as we agreed in our talks in Washington, if necessary to Lebanon as well. I want to stress the excellent work done in this field by decision of the government by the legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry, Mr. Rosenne, by the Attorney General, and by the committee that was authorized by the government, which consisted of the Foreign Minister, the Defence Minister and the Minister of Agriculture — and I, too, naturally, took part in the deliberations of this committee. We built the peace treaty on the basis of the well-known precedents after the two world wars, as well as on other precedents, as we read and studied the documents.

Accordingly, the first article in the peace treaty which we are submitting is: "The state of war is hereby terminated." This is one of the accepted formulations according to international law. There are also other terms, such as "cessation of state of war," or "The state of war has come to an end." We chose this term.

After this article, which, of course, gives the principal content of every peace treaty, including the draft submitted by us, come the other articles, namely: The establishment of diplomatic and consular relations, economic relations, movement of populations, the solution of the problem of the refugees, offsetting of obligations of both parties, in regard to property that is, in connection with the fact that there are Arab refugees and a fact which has been forgotten recently, and we are raising it again, namely: Jewish refugees — I refer to our brethren from the Arab countries, whom we, of course, welcomed with open arms in our country, but they were robbed of all their property. And there are all the other articles involved in a peace treaty.

Of course, there is the important problem of determining the frontiers, and we have submitted clear proposals in accordance with the principles presented in the private conversation between the President of the United States and myself during my visit to Washington. We have requested the Secretary of State that the ideas we submit to him be kept for the knowledge of the U.S. government alone and shall not be transmitted to the Arab states.

Everyone will understand why I cannot go into detail in public on the territorial problem. The Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee knows exactly what we have submitted, both because we brought to its knowledge the document the content of which I submitted to the President of the United States, and also because the peace treaty, with the covering letter, has been brought to the knowledge of the committee.

**Q.** Do you attach maps, Mr. Begin?

**A.** No, there are no maps. The frontiers will be determined in negotiations between ourselves and our neighbours. We have only brought to the knowledge of the President of the United States — as well as now, in the covering letter to the peace treaty — the principles on which we base ourselves, but the maps will be drawn after the negotiations with our neighbours are successfully concluded, and then they will constitute an annex to the peace treaty. But that will be a further stage. We have, thus, presented these principles for the second time, and the Foreign Minister will discuss these principles with the Secretary of State.

We are also aware that the Secretary of State has also asked the Arab states for a model peace treaty. They have given him no undertaking that they will supply such a document, and it is possible that the Arab states will only supply principles. We shall know about this in two weeks' time. We preferred, in view of our attitude, to submit a complete peace treaty, and the discussion and negotiations will take place on this.

**Q.** Is there any basis for the reports that the Foreign Minister has met King Hussein of Jordan? How do you visualize the partition of Judea and Samaria that Israel will agree to discuss, according to the Foreign Minister, if such a proposal is submitted by the Arabs?

**A.** As for the first question, be good enough to submit it to Mr. Dayan or to King Hussein.

As for the second question, that was not what the Foreign Minister said. I should like to point out that he said what he said with my agreement and approval. He said this: There is a debate in the House in connection with what is called "Partition," through "Territorial compromise," of Judea and Samaria. It is a futile debate. Were the Arabs to submit such a plan, we would consider it and we would decide. He said "were" — he did not say "if." But he pointed out that there is no such proposal, and he knows what he is talking about. There is no such proposal and there never has been. And now you have confirmation at the Foreign Minister's conference in Cairo. What did they decide yesterday? An Israeli withdrawal to the lines of the 4th of June 1967, including withdrawal from East Jerusalem, namely total withdrawal. This is the Arab plan and there is no other proposal on their part. Therefore all the debate in the House was completely unrealistic. There is no foundation for it. That was what the Foreign Minister said.

**Q.** What is your reaction to criticism by Gush Emunim of the slow pace of settlement and statements that Gush Emunim groups would settle even without government approval?

**A.** The day before yesterday I met the Gush Emunim people at Maale Adumim and I did not make a speech. My silence received more publicity than all my speeches. I think that anyone who speaks or writes is entitled, sometimes, to abstain from speaking or writing. In regard to settlement the government has taken decisions, the government will consider these matters. Our position is clear: We do not recognize the concept of "Illegal settlement" in Judea and Samaria. We recognize the right of every Jew to live in any part and in any place in the Land of Israel. We have left no room for doubt. In the conversations with the U.S. President and the Secretary of State, that this is our position. We will take the appropriate decision at the time when we, as the responsible body, think fit.

**Q.** Will the government acquiesce in settlement that has not been approved in advance by the government?

**A.** That is a hypothetical question. When it arises we shall consider it. There is no point in going into hypothetical questions.

**Q.** In one of your talks with President Carter he proposed keeping in direct touch with you either in writing or by telephone. I should like to know with what frequency this line has been used since then.

**A.** I have sent the President two messages and received three messages from him. We have not yet had any telephone conversations. But we have been in touch and we shall continue to be. I received the third message from the President just before I left for Rumania. It was a confirmation of the message I sent him when I left the airspace of the United States on my way home, and in this letter he writes "That we have established a personal close relationship." I said so on my return from the United States, and now the public can read

that this is the opinion of the President of the United States, such a relationship is to be welcomed. I hope that both of us will use it whenever necessary.

**Q.** Have you decided on a procedure for such occasions?

**A.** No, but the President told me, in a personal talk after the conclusion of all the conversations, when we were alone — in this conversation he proposed this approach, that is, "we shall remain in touch: You can write to me, telephone me." But I have not exploited this offer — I don't think it has been necessary. We can get in touch at very short notice by letters sent through our Ambassador, who can ask for a meeting with the President, or by our inviting the U.S. Ambassador. It takes only a few hours for letters to reach Washington or Jerusalem, so there is no problem of delay in establishing touch.

**Q.** What is the attitude of King Hussein towards the PLO and the Middle East dispute as you understand it?

**A.** (You asked) how I understand King Hussein's position. Well, I understand it more or less. He has no love for the organization called P.L.O. He proved that during a certain September... as for his approach, he pursues the general Arab line. Hussein insists on total Israeli withdrawal — including the handing over of the Old City of Jerusalem and East Jerusalem to what is referred to as Arab sovereignty. That is his position. He did not change it ten years ago, he did not change it when he was approached with certain plans, and I believe there are grounds for saying that he has not changed it to this very day.

**Q.** Do you believe that he also rejects outright the proposal attributed to the Foreign Minister, which is known as "functional compromise?"

**A.** I can't answer that. I don't know.

**Q.** Why the delay in manning the vacant portfolios in your cabinet? When do you propose to man them? And, in your evaluation, is the D.M.C.'s joining the government only a question of time, as has been stated recently?

**A.** I can now tell you that tomorrow morning there will be a meeting in my office between Prof. Yadin and myself — one might say, we will be starting the working day with that. We shall be meeting at 8 a.m. tomorrow, and I shall be conveying certain things to him — it would not be seemly that I make them public before I see Prof. Yadin — in the hope that the D.M.C. will join the government. Let me say that all of us in the government would like the D.M.C. to join. If there is a positive response, we shall man the portfolios with the candidates put forward by the D.M.C. And should this come about, say, by the beginning of next week, or between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur — we may conceivably find the suitable day between the two festivals — we shall convene a special session of the Knesset in order to present for its approval, as required by law, the manning of the portfolios. Should the D.M.C. decide, heaven forbid, despite our having moved some distance further towards the D.M.C., not to join — the decision, after all, is up to the D.M.C. — we shall obviously man the portfolios (with further delay). It is simply out of the question that they not be filled by the opening of the Knesset's winter session. You must appreciate that the head of the Liberal Party is now in the United States on an official mission. There are serious issues, requiring negotiation, within the Likud factions as well — and that will also take some time. But one way or another, we are agreed that the government will present itself to the Knesset for the winter session with all the Ministries manned.

**Q.** Am I correct in detecting a note of optimism in your voice?

**A.** I cannot confirm that. All I can say is that we are making another joint effort to go a considerable distance to meet the demands of the D.M.C. I assume they will ap-

preciate this, but, as I have said, the decision is up to the D.M.C., and we shall know in a few days what their decision will be.

**Q.** Are you or the government making an effort to establish diplomatic relations with countries with whom we have none at present? Recently we have heard about India. Secondly, what is the relationship that you envisage with South Africa?

**A.** We want to renew diplomatic relations with all the countries that broke them off, and that is the function of Mr. Ehud Avriel in the Foreign Ministry. This is a continual effort. For instance, I received a message from the ruler of a certain African country, and he, on his own initiative, mentions the fact that we have no diplomatic relations at present, but he hopes that they will be restored. I was glad to hear this, but for the time being this is only a promise.

As you know, when I presented the government, I said that we want normalization of relations between ourselves and the Soviet Union, but it was the Soviet Union that broke off relations with us on the eve of the Six-Day War, and it must take the initiative to renew them. If it takes such an initiative, we shall agree to renew diplomatic relations. Of course, we shall demand that every Jew shall have the right to come to the Land of Israel without let or hindrance, and — which is also self-evident — the liberation of all prisoners of Zion. But we are interested in normalization with the Soviet Union. It is a fact that we have normal diplomatic relations with Rumania. True, this is the only East European country which has such relations with us, but obviously it is to the advantage of both parties.

As for South Africa, we have good relations with South Africa, and we shall continue to maintain them. I don't think we need to hide this fact — I should like to point out that we are against any form of racism — we shall not reject any hand that is held out to us. Israel is a small country, surrounded by enemies, threatened, and if another country wants to maintain relations of understanding with us, we shall accept the outstretched hand. These are our relations with South Africa, that is how they should be, in my opinion, and we must say so to every person in Israel and also abroad — without hiding the fact.

**Q.** What will be the attitude of the Government if Gush Emunim establishes settlements without waiting for specific government decisions?

**A.** I reiterate our principle: Every Jew has the right to settle anywhere in the Land of Israel. This is our faith, and we shall stand by it in debates with people at home, with people abroad. We have no intention whatsoever of changing this position. The principle is correct. But we must not forget that there are also practical problems of security. And therefore I assume that the pioneers of Gush Emunim will also want a government decision.

**Q.** You frequently remind the opposition that for ten years they have tried various kinds of compromise without success. Do you think this government's plans will bring about a change of attitude?

**A.** The government that was said to believe in the Allon plan tried it for ten years — in two directions: With the Arabs and with the United States. The Arabs rejected it outright — until yesterday in Cairo — and the Americans rejected it, until that letter which was sent two days ago by the State Department spokesman. To come to us today and complain: Why don't you accept the plan for territorial compromise in Judea and Samaria? As if the Alignment, on the basis of this plan, had brought us peace. And it is not a question of two months — we have been here for two months and two weeks — but of ten whole years, an historical era. We contend that this plan has only one result: pressure for further withdrawals. They were told: You are prepared to withdraw, aren't

you, in all sectors? What you are prepared to do does not bring peace. If you want a peace settlement, we should soon approach the June 1967 lines, with, perhaps, minor adjustments.

We have changed this policy. We have different principles, as I have brought them to the notice of the President of the United States, as we recorded them in the covering letter to our draft peace treaty. And we stand by these principles. Of course, there are differences of opinion. Only someone who has not studied the matter can fail to be aware that all negotiations for a peace treaty have started with differences of opinion. For instance, after World War I, the negotiations between the Allies and Turkey took almost six years... and in that case, there were not the problems that exist between ourselves and the Arabs.

After all, the problem between ourselves and the Arabs is not a territorial one at all. If it had been a problem of that kind, why did they not make peace with us for 19 years, when we did not hold the Old City of Jerusalem or the Golan Heights or Sinai or Judea and Samaria? Now they try to create the impression that that is the problem, but it is not so. The fact is that the conflict is, in the full sense of the term, historic. They did not want a Jewish State. We can say the same today after Assad's statement a few days ago to Mr. Ochs of the "New York Times," that they still do not want a Jewish State. Assad said: "If you ask any Arab citizen, he will tell you that he wants the State of Israel to disappear." He added, it is true, that if you ask any Israeli, he will tell you that he wants the elimination of the Arabs — but Assad has no right to speak in the name of our people. I am sure that no Israeli citizen says so, and we do not want any elimination of the Arabs. But Assad was entitled to speak for his people. And we may assume that they still do not want a Jewish State. That is the real root of the conflict, and of course it is difficult to see how to reach understanding. It will take time. That is why I said, at the state banquet in the White House, that we need a sense of urgency and we also need patience. A peace treaty is not an easy thing to attain, when there are differences of opinion like these. I believe with implicit faith — here we are on the threshold of a new year — that the day of peace will come. The one thing that is inevitable is peace. There are historical proofs of this fact in every part of the globe. In the end, the day of peace is bound to come — and it will come. I believe that the government's policy leads towards serious consideration of peace treaties — not interim agreements, which mean only one thing: Israeli withdrawals without peace, once more, twice more, always without peace, without even the ending of the state of war, of which so much has been said — but a serious discussion of peace treaties.

**Q.** Without territorial concessions either?

**A.** What is the meaning of territorial concessions? The territorial content of a peace treaty is a matter for negotiation. But we have already had experience of prior statements about territorial concessions. Have they brought us peace?... We are trying a different political policy. As they say in popular language, give us a chance. We have only just started. In two months, can we change all the things that have been done wrong in ten years?

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, not so long ago you surprised the press and the public with your trip to Rumania. Where do you intend to surprise us in the near future?

**A.** In the first place, if I surprised you, I beg your pardon. I promise to make every possible effort so that you won't be surprised. I have a visit scheduled in the near future — I can't tell you exactly where at this time — in a certain country. But it is not in Eastern Europe: That I can tell you.

**Q.** In Western Europe, perhaps?

**A.** Well, if we take this route or that, you will arrive along with me at the country I

am to visit. But it will be a very interesting visit. It will take place in the near future. The two governments have decided that it is better to wait until the date of the visit is fixed before it is made public. So here you already have something on account in anticipation of the surprise. But I didn't surprise you with my visit to Rumania. If the reporters don't read their papers, what can I do? It was published in all the papers that the Rumanian Ambassador called on me one day and brought me an invitation from the Prime Minister of Rumania, and then we made the matter public...

**Q.** Which ambassador has been to see you lately with an invitation?

**A.** Several ambassadors.

**Q.** Ever since the political upheaval in May and the formation of the present government of Israel, there have been reports of several shifts in the American position, and not all of them negative from Israel's point of view. For instance, President Carter spoke of the "Densification" of the existing settlements and there has been talk of American feelers concerning the possibility of an Israeli trusteeship regime in Judea and Samaria for a brief period. I assume that Israeli policy does not aim at a trusteeship in Judea and Samaria, but why couldn't such ideas serve as a basis for negotiations, which seems to be a more convenient starting-point than the American position of the past ten years.

**A.** I thank you for putting this question. It confirms my statement in the Knesset and at a session of the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee — that, in March there was really something like a confrontation, and that was before the elections. I think we are making a not unsuccessful effort to correct the confrontation which took place prior to the elections, and this requires an effort.

The two matters you mentioned are correct, but what can we do if a trusteeship such as you spoke of is connected with a so-called "Palestinian" unit, or entity? We said frankly: All these proposals lead to only one result: The establishment of a Palestine state, an Arafatist state, a P.L.O. state, and that is a threat to the very existence of the state of Israel. Therefore we utterly and explicitly rejected the plan in toto, including that part of it which speaks of a trusteeship regime and the United States Government is aware of this.

And I am pleased that, despite all the difficulties the opposition had to wrestle with, it was shown in the recent Knesset session that on this issue there is truly a national consensus, except for the Communists and, perhaps, Shelli — though Shelli abstained, it didn't vote nay — the entire Knesset, all the Zionist factions are united in rejecting negotiations with the murderers' organization called P.L.O. and the establishment of a Palestinian-Arafatist state in Judea and Samaria. In this, we are literally expressing the will of the people. We shall continue to express it, and should there be differences of opinion, these differences will stem from the policy of other countries. For other countries this is a question of policy — they have a certain policy — but for us it is a matter of life, of the life of our people and our children, in the plainest and deepest meaning of the question. And that is why we know we are right, and insist on our case.

We shall not conduct negotiations with the P.L.O. murderers and we shall not agree to a Palestinian-Arafatist state. Negotiations should be conducted with our neighbours on peace treaties, and every party to the negotiations will put forth his proposals. There is nothing new in this, this is the custom everywhere. In accordance with this procedure, negotiations must be held with a Jewish State and it must not be made an exception to all the accepted rules, these rules must be applied to it, too, to the Jewish state.

**Q.** If the Americans were to put forth the idea of a trusteeship for a considerable period — could this idea in that case be a basis for negotiations?

A. Very well, you may put that question too. We do not accept the idea of a trusteeship regime — in fact, no one knows exactly what it entails, and it was a brief period of years that was in question. But this is not the main thing: The cardinal point is the result. Does a nation live on five years of borrowed time? And would ten years of borrowed time be a different proposition? We must see to it that our grandchildren will also live — I don't know if you have grandchildren, but I already have eight, may their number increase — and we must also see to the coming generations. What nation will agree to live on ten years of borrowed time? we must ensure the future of the nation, its peace and security — and this proposed trusteeship regime is bound up with the establishment of a Palestinian entity, a homeland for the Palestinians, a national home for the Palestinians — whatever name you want to give it, they all lead to one result: An Arafatist state, a state which will endanger the very existence of the Jewish state, a state which will become a Soviet base, with Soviet artillery, with Soviet advisers in Bethlehem, with virtually our entire civilian population coming within range of their conventional weapons. Can we even imagine the extent of the threat that will overhang us? every man, woman and child in danger of being shelled, of being killed, by day and by night: At every moment. What responsible government could permit such a situation to come about?

Let me perhaps quote Mrs. Golda Meir, who, after the Rogers Plan was submitted to her, said to the correspondent of the "New York Times" — I remember her very words, I was a member of the cabinet at the time: "Any government of Israel that accepted the plan known as the Rogers Plan would be betraying its people." This an extremely grave statement. For my own part, I do not like using that word in connection with policy. Of course, there are sometimes traitors among every people and they are placed on trial. On political matters, everyone is entitled to his own opinion, and I shall not describe someone who thinks differently from me as a traitor. He has the right to hold his own view. But let us examine these conditions rationally, intelligently, and we shall see to what extent they imperil not only our independence but our very lives and existence. Therefore we did not accept that proposal. I trust that there is no one in Israel who would accept such proposals.

And it is good that the world is aware of this from the outset. I believe that if the world knows from the start that this is our view — particularly if it has strong public support — this will ward off pressure.

Q. As regards Western Europe: Are you optimistic about the prospects for improving relations with France? Would you like to pay an official visit as Prime Minister to England? and would you be prepared to meet with official personages from West Germany?

A. As to France: There was once a Franco-Israel alliance, which was annulled on the eve of the Six-Day War, and since then French policy has been totally negative. We should like to see a change for the better. We have very devoted — and highly influential — friends in France. True, political decisions are, in line with the French — Gaullist — constitution, in the hands of the President, and therefore our friends can only try to exert influence: They cannot take decisions. But we have friends within the government, in Parliament, and virtually the entire French public supports the State of Israel. And therefore an effort must be made to bring about a renewal of the friendship — and, if possible, a resumption of the alliance as well. This of course depends on the reply of the other side. As to a visit to France, I should of course be ready to undertake it if I am invited. It is not true, as one paper wrote, that I am making all kinds of efforts to wangle an invitation. I do not need to make any efforts. I am Prime Minister of Israel, and if my counterpart, the Prime



Minister of France, invites me, I shall go. And if he does not invite me, I shall first of all stay at home — which I take pleasure in doing — and I shall go to those countries to which I have been invited. I have to date received no French suggestion concerning the date for an invitation. If I receive a letter from my counterpart the Prime Minister of France, inviting me to visit France — and if we arrange a date together — I shall, of course, reply in the affirmative.

As to Britain: I shall certainly be happy to visit there. That would be a very interesting visit. I shall be pleased to visit there.

And as to Germany: I have not changed my mind as regards that agreement which was signed between the German people and the Jewish people in the generation of the Holocaust. My opinion was negative and has remained unaltered. In my view, no such agreement should have been signed. But it is now a fact, and we have regular, normal relations — as the phrase goes — with Germany, and in the light of this I shall fulfil my official public duty as I have been charged to do, and if my official duty demands that I meet with a German representative, I shall do so.

**Q.** Around this time, the hundred days' grace given any government from the outset is drawing to an end. Have your expectations been fulfilled concerning the initial functioning of the government? And in the same connection: Do you think the opposition leader, Mr. Shimon Peres, is fulfilling his role as an opposition leader should?

**A.** The idea of the hundred days is of American origin. Can we within one hundred days set right all the distortions brought about by the Alignment over a period of twenty-nine years? Who even dreamed of doing that? Even a year won't be enough. But I at least, in all fairness appealed to the Knesset and the public at large: Give us a year, one year out of four, and I trust the public will show patience. We want to correct the policy and the economy and social conditions. Let me illustrate: We shall make every possible effort to solve the problem of poverty, especially where housing is concerned. Poverty is a disgrace to Israel, and certainly to the socialists who let it remain or created it. Forty-five thousand families are living under inhuman conditions. A ten-member family living in one-and-a-half rooms: How can they lead a civilized life, a family life, how can children study like that? We want to solve this problem, and I have proposed — and this is about to be carried out — that we call upon the Jewish People, in the thirtieth year of the renaissance of Israel, that all the donors double their donations and that everything above the amount they usually give be directed towards that end.

We have started. Last Thursday we had a meeting with the U.J.A. mission from the U.S. and Canada. I made this appeal and we raised twenty-three million dollars in the course of one evening: Five million dollars more than they pledged a year ago. Thus, we have an initial amount — though still insufficient — which is earmarked for that goal. And I hope we shall get the amount required so that we can begin building. We have to build eleven thousand homes every year, and if in the course of our years we can get three hundred million dollars annually, we shall solve the problem, and it is to that end that our efforts will be directed. But can we build all these flats within one hundred days? We have to at least be allowed a reasonable period of time.

We want to right the country's economic set-up, and we shall, I hope, do so — in fact, on the basis of information which I cannot yet make public, I assume that we shall succeed. Today, too, on the eve of the new year, I shall appeal to the public: give us a reasonable period of time. We want to put things right, but we cannot in one fell swoop set straight all the distortions created in the various spheres of national life.

As to the second part of the question — on the leader of the opposition — that question should be directed to my friend, the opposition leader, Mr. Shimon Peres. But since you have asked me, I cannot but reply. We have been personal friends for over twenty years, and we were in the government together — we were even together in opposition to a government. I invited the Alignment to take part in a National Unity Government, and I can repeat that offer, but they said they didn't want that under any circumstances — as is their right.

Mr. Peres is of course very wise and experienced. He is now the opposition leader and in his view is fulfilling his role properly. He claims that the government is not fulfilling its role. But on the basis of experience, I can tell you that the opposition has not yet been born which will say that the government is functioning properly. So it's very natural that he should say this.

When we were opposition, we knew how to focus on issues concerning which there is national unity, and we demonstrated that national unity. I laid down three rules for the opposition — but not as in Britain. There, they say that the task of the opposition is to oppose. I do not accept that definition, even though the British parliament is the mother of parliaments.

We are a country surrounded by enemies, and the parliamentary opposition must abide by these three rules: Generally to express differences, at times to demonstrate national unity, always to strive for change. In the meantime, there has been a change — but if Mr. Peres wants a change after the change, that is his right. As to expressing differences: they do that in the Knesset and in their newspaper with great acerbity, as I both hear and read. But as for demonstrating national unity we knew how to show unity over the Entebbe operation — twice: When the grave decision was taken on negotiating with the hijackers, we accepted responsibility, in a certain situation in which, we believed, there was no other alternative. When a decision was taken to mount a military operation, we accepted responsibility — even though there was a fear of many lives lost, or perhaps a tragedy. In both cases we assumed responsibility. And, as you know, the former Prime Minister confirmed this with full moral force.

As regards the matter of the German scientists, we were all united (the German scientists in Egypt, as you will recall).

Concerning a Palestinian State, concerning negotiations with that murderous organization known as the P.L.O. — how did Yigal Allon put it: "We cannot take the route of the partial consensus." We cannot? That is a complete mistake. Consensus can be only partial: For if it were total, there would be no government-and-opposition. Only in a national unity government is there — or there should be — full consensus: and that is no easy matter either. But when there is a government and an opposition, there can be consensus on certain issues only.

I believe I have the right to say that we set an exemplary standard as regards the second rule as well: at times, when the national need demands it, to stand together and demonstrate national unity to the world. To date, the opposition has not acted in this way. Perhaps it will yet mend its ways, as it still has plenty of time. Moderator: I should like to wish you a happy new year and to thank you for your replies to our questions.

Prime Minister: As I am speaking over the I.D.F. radio station, allow me to wish all the soldiers and officers of Israel a happy and blessed new year. We have a glorious army of which all the people of Israel are proud. All the best, soldiers of Israel — we are proud of you.

**42. UN Conference on Desertification denounces an Israeli paper on the Negev, 8 September 1977.**

*The degree to which the UN and its specialized agencies have become subjected to political considerations, was demonstrated again at a United Nations conference on desertification, which took place in Nairobi. Israel had presented a paper on the subject "The Negev: a desert reclaimed." The conference, by a majority of 45 in favour, 17 against with 14 abstentions, decided to denounce the paper saying it departed from scientific and technical issues and expressed "religious fanaticism." Obviously, this denunciation was part of an Arab attempt to discredit Israel in any international forum and conference. Text:*

**U.N. Conference on Desertification (Nairobi, September 1977)**

**7. Associated Case Study "The Negev: a desert reclaimed"**

**The United Nations Conference on Desertification**

**Considering** that the Conference is solely directed to the problems of desertification,  
**Conscious** of the necessity to examine all climatical, ecological, human and social factors leading to desertification,

**Having taken cognizance** of all documents presented to the Conference,

**Considering** that the associated case study **The Negev: a desert reclaimed** presented by Israel, departs from scientific and technical issues related to the Conference in that it expresses religious fanaticism and contains elements which are historically inaccurate,

**Considering also** that the said document is not in conformity with the aims and purposes of the Conference as outlined in General Assembly Resolution 3337 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974,

**Considering** that the policies of settlement and displacement of populations in the Negev, in the West Bank of the Jordan, and in other places in the area constitute an aggravating factor leading to desertification,

**Denounces** the associated case study **The Negev: a desert reclaimed.**

Adopted by 45-17-14.

**15th plenary meeting**

**8 September 1977**

**43. Interview with Prime Minister Begin in Ma'ariv, 12 September 1977.**

*In this interview, an abridged version of which follows, Mr. Begin said he was in close contact with President Carter; he also said that the U.S. knows the Israeli ideas concerning the future borders, but that those ideas will have to be discussed between Israel and the Arab leaders. Mr. Begin for the first time hinted that some moves were afoot when he answered to a question about the road to peace being blocked: "I have no reason to assume that the road to peace will be blocked." He also reiterated his opposition to additional interim agreements.*

**Q.** You have repeatedly said, in Washington and on your return home after meeting

President Carter, that there is no confrontation between Israel and the United States. However, there are differences on substantive issues: A homeland for the Palestinians, withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 borders and the attitude to the P.L.O. Is there a chance to achieve peace with the Arabs on the terms which appear to be essential to our survival when, on the most fundamental issues, there is no agreement between Israel and the U.S.A.?

A. After the election which surprised all the observers, including observers in the the United States — and I have not ceased apologising for this surprise — and before my visit to Washington, everyone forecast that there would be a confrontation, even a serious confrontation, between President Carter and myself. The confrontation did not come. That is what I told friends at Blair House when I returned from a personal conversation with President Carter. That was the absolute truth. There was no confrontation. On the contrary, a personal relationship developed between the President and me. I have additional proof: In the President's letter to me, on the eve of my trip to Rumania, Mr. Carter wrote: 'A personal close relationship has been created between us'. As for differences between us and the United States: They were not created after 17 May 1977. They have existed since the Six-Day War, they worsened considerably in March 1977 in what was called the confrontation between the then Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, and President Carter, three months before the elections to the Ninth Knesset and about four months before the establishment of the new government. The new government is trying to correct the situation connected with the confrontation which developed since the days of the Alignment-led government. I will bring one example which shows a change for the better in the relationship between the United States and Israel: In March this year, Israel was explicitly asked to be prepared to allow the organization known as the P.L.O. to participate in the Geneva Conference. This demand has never been presented to the new government. The truth is we anticipated the Arabs' demand that the terrorists participate in the reconvened Geneva Conference and so we took alternative proposals to President Carter. This is in case the Arab states should refuse to permit the reconvening of the Conference because of their stubborn denial that the terrorists participate in it.

Q. Is there anyone in the government who believes that the Arabs will agree to sign a peace treaty which does not define the territorial problem?

A. Between Israel and the Arabs there exist fundamental differences over the content of the peace treaties — and especially over the territorial problem. They contend that Israel must make a total withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 borders, including the transfer to Arab control of Old Jerusalem. They argue that a Palestinian — more precisely an Arafat — state should be established in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip. One can say that this is Rakah's plan. If anyone wants an agreement under these terms let him say so explicitly, as he identifies with the Rakah faction. All the Zionist factions in Israel, perhaps including even Shelli, are opposed to this.

It should therefore be asked whether, if there is no readiness to accept the Rakah or Cairo and Damascus plan because of differences of view between the Arabs and, at least 113 M.K.'s, we should despair of the chance to make peace. The Arabs reject every Israeli plan, including that of Mapam which calls for a united Jerusalem and for 'annexation' of Part of the Golan Heights and of at least part of the Gaza Strip. The firm answer is that under no circumstances should we despair of the chance for peace. It is war which is avoidable. Peace is inevitable. This we have learned from the history of wars between all the peoples in all periods. Therefore, the day of peace will also come to the Middle East.

There have always been differences of opinion between the warring parties when sitting down for peace talks.

**Q.** The Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Ariel Sharon, says that Israel cannot under any circumstances withdraw from the Golan Heights, whereas in the peace plan you presented to President Carter in the White House, Israel expresses readiness in an official government document for a withdrawal on the Golan Heights. Are there two voices here?

**A.** No there is a government policy and not a policy of this or that minister. I asked both the President of the United States and the Secretary of State not to hand over to the Arabs our proposals with regard to the permanent borders which are to be determined in the peace treaties. In view of this request, you cannot expect me to give details on the border issue in a press interview, as within a few hours all the Arabs leaders would know about them. There aren't two voices, but only that of the government. There is no policy of Ministers.

**Q.** President Carter and you agreed to keep in regular contact through letters and telephones. Apart from the letter you received from the President on the eve of your visit to Romania, were there other contacts?

**A.** Apart from this letter, we exchanged two other personal letters and this morning (Thursday of last week) I sent the President another letter. We had no telephone conversations.

**Q.** At the end of October this year the U.N. force mandate in Sinai will expire and at the end of November the mandate in the Golan Heights will also expire. Have talks begun on extending the mandates in the two areas?

**A.** This is not a problem which worries me. There is reason to assume that everyone will agree to extending the U.N. forces' mandates both in the south and in the north. It is worth mentioning that both Egypt and Syria are interested in extending these mandates. We shall, however, be ready for any situation when it occurs.

**Q.** In the meantime, the Egyptians continue to violate the interim agreement and the Chief of Staff said that they are 'playing hide and seek' with the Americans and with us. What does the government intend to do about it?

**A.** Some time ago I received a notice from General Gamasy, the Egyptian War Minister, through General Silasvuo, U.N. forces' commander in the Middle East, that Egypt would strictly observe the interim agreement. Since then, however, it has become clear that a special situation exists in the canal area: the Egyptians are sending thousands of extra troops into Sinai, in violation of the agreements. Prior to the U.N. checkup they returned them to the west bank, and so at the time of the checkup there were no more troops there than had been agreed on. After the U.N. checkup, they returned the troops to the east bank, to Sinai. This is a situation that we cannot accept. As a result the Minister of Defence, Ezer Weizman, had another talk with General Silasvuo to inform him of the continuing Egyptian violations. Ezer requested him to fly to Cairo to hand General Gamasy our demand that the agreement be honoured. We, on our part, honour and keep the agreement. I requested that General Gamasy be told that in the present period all of us must consider the process of peace-making in the Middle East and not engage in violations of agreements that have already been signed. According to the U.N. forces' commander, the Egyptian commander agreed to this. Now we have General Gamasy's renewed commitment, and I hope that we will stand up to the test.

**Q.** Did the Israel government inform the U.S. of the continuation of the Egyptian violations and of the seriousness with which they were regarded by Israel?

A. The Americans are aware of this development as they see it for themselves on the ground.

Q. If, despite all the efforts to achieve peace, the road to peace is blocked, would Israel agree to further interim settlements?

A. I have no reason to assume that the road to peace will be blocked. We have proposed no further interim settlements, which imply one thing only: An Israeli withdrawal without peace. How far can one withdraw without peace? We want to conduct negotiations for peace, not for interim settlements. Therefore, we have presented the draft of a peace treaty between us and our neighbours.

Q. Have you already received from the U.S.A. a final reply concerning the purchase of F-16 planes?

A. No. There are further contacts and clarifications on this matter.

Q. Members of Gush Emunim claim that even without the government's approval they have a right to settle throughout the Land of Israel, in accordance with the government's decision allowing every Jew to settle anywhere. Is that so?

A. In all the talks with the U.S. administration we have made our position unambiguous. There is no illegal Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel. Every Jew is entitled to establish his home anywhere in the Land of Israel. It cannot be expected that a Jewish government should adopt a discriminatory policy on this issue.

Q. Does the government have a detailed plan for a settlement map, and when will it start?

A. I will not reply now.

Q. President Carter requested that you refrain from approving new settlements. It is believed, and has not yet been denied, that he added that he regarded your response to his request as a test of the friendly relationship built up between you both. Are you not concerned that the continuation of settlement will undermine this relationships?

A. I never received such a hint from President Carter, Mr. Carter reacted twice to the government's decisions. On the first occasion he reacted with complete understanding, expressing a positive attitude to the possibility of an increase in the population of existing settlements. He explained to the American people that I have commitments to the Israeli public on this issue. On the second occasion, the President reacted by identifying with the State Department's assertion that the establishment of settlements was illegal. On the question of legality I have stated my view: No Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel is illegal.

Differences of opinion between Israel and the U.S. have existed for ten years, since the Six-Day War. One day Ambassador Toon brought the then Prime Minister, Mr. Rabin, a protest note from President Ford about a settlement which was established in accordance with the government's decision. The Prime Minister did not accept the protest.

#### **44. Interview with Prime Minister Begin in Yediot Aharonot, 12 September 1977.**

*The main foreign policy issues discussed in this interview were Israel-U.S. relations, the role of the PLO in future talks and Israel's role in protecting minorities in the Middle East. Mr. Begin declared that he regarded "Israel as the protector of the minorities in all of the Middle East." This statement was made in reference to Israeli military activities in*

*southern Lebanon in the past two years. Mr. Begin also explained the nature of the next phase in peacemaking, saying that he hopes for the renewal of the Geneva Conference under the terms worked out in Washington. He said that while he and President Sadat agreed that a working committee of Foreign Ministers should be set up, President Assad opposed the idea and the matter was dropped. Abridged version of the foreign policy section of the interview follows:*

**Q.** With your permission, Mr. Prime Minister, how to regard the current erosion in U.S.-Israel relations against the background of the dispute over the PLO issue?

**A.** First of all I'd like to get some dates right. The erosion you are talking about began in March 1977, in other words several months before the general elections here in Israel. Back then Mr. Carter was already President of the United States and I learned that all the observers there were certain that the Alignment would form the next government — and this was before Mr. Peres replaced Mr. Rabin as party chief. The assumption in the United States was that Mr. Rabin would be the man to form the next government in Israel and already in March explicit and direct pressure began to be imposed on us to take part in the Geneva Conference together with the Arab murder organization the PLO. Therefore I think that at that time the situation was critical. I believe that were such American pressure to be exerted on us today, namely that we attend Geneva together with the PLO, our political situation would be a grave one. Except that the present government would have said unconditionally and without any hesitation: No, it is out of the question and we would have exerted on us today, namely that we attend Geneva together with the PLO, our political situation would be a grave one. Except that the present government would have said unconditionally and without any hesitation: No, it is out of the question and we would have stood our ground, even though obviously the situation would not have been a pleasant one. Now however, the Secretary of State Cyrus Vance has stated explicitly here, in the cabinet meeting room, that the participation of the organization of murderers in the Geneva Conference is conditional on the consent of the parties. He also said this to the Arabs when he was in Cairo, Damascus, Amman and Riyadh. Therefore we must state the truth, namely that today the U.S. Administration is not pressuring the Israeli government to go to Geneva with the organization of murderers known as the PLO. On the contrary, the U.S. is explicitly leaving the decision in the hands of the parties which means, in our hands as well, because we are one of the parties. When I left for Washington and my talks with President Carter I first drew up two alternative proposals with respect to our fundamental approach to the framework of the peace-making process. We proposed that the Geneva Conference be reconvened starting on October 10, after the Jewish holidays. The session would be convened on the basis of letters of invitation of the two co-chairmen, the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union, as provided in U.N. Security Council Resolution 338. We likewise proposed that after the opening meeting there be set up mixed commissions consisting of representatives of Israel and each one of the Arab states separately, and that in these commissions negotiations would be conducted over a peace treaty. We added that after these commissions completed their work, and if we arrived at an agreement over the content of a peace treaty — a further session of the Geneva Conference would be convened and the ceremony of signing the peace treaty would take place. We stressed that in the Geneva Conference there would participate only delegations of sovereign states, and when President Carter asked me if we'd agree that Lebanon participate I replied, yes. It is clear beyond any doubt that at the Geneva Conference there is not and will not be any place for the murderers organization. Incidentally, when I presented this position to Ruma-

nian President Nicolae Ceaucescu he said to me: Your programme lacked nothing, and then he again raised the issue of PLO participation at Geneva.

**Q.** It often seems as if the issue of the PLO has reached a sort of standstill. What do you think will be the eventual outcome?

**A.** We took into account the possibility that the Arab states might require that the murderers organization in question take part in the Geneva Conference, and we therefore brought the U.S. President two alternative proposals: 1) That the good offices of the United States be used to set up the mixed commissions I mentioned, without an opening session of the Geneva Conference. To this end U.S. diplomats would visit the Arab capitals and Jerusalem to determine who the representatives of the various countries would be in such commissions. 2) What is known as proximity talks. The Americans proposed this themselves back in 1972. We also put forward a third proposal, but not in writing: seeing as in September the Foreign Ministers of the Arab states and Israel will be in New York, they could certainly be brought together, again through the good offices of the United States. I wish to point out that President Sadat also proposed that a working committee of Foreign Ministers be set up, and welcomed this proposal, but President Assad of Syria was opposed to it and the matter was dropped.

**Q.** It is a fact that many Arabs in Israel and the Arab states are suspicious, and even downright afraid, of you. Your image as commander of the IZL lives with them to this very day. How would you define your attitude to the Arabs.

**A.** First of all, you can ask the Arab and Druse members of the Knesset and they will tell you how very cordial our relations have been with each other for years. As for my personal attitude towards the Arabs I will tell you frankly: Ze'ev Jabotinsky wrote: "I relate to the Arabs as to every nation with a degree of respect and indifference". — that is, what he wanted to say was: If it's a matter of love then I love my own people. As far as all the others are concerned, I respect them, but I cannot relate to them as I do to my own people. I want to say, that I have a profound respect for the Arab nation. The Arab nation made a very great contribution to human culture. It is true that it has had a period of decay. But that is something that has happened to other powerful nations as well. I am definitely aware of the Arab's important contribution to human culture. It is a fact that in the past two years a profound understanding — I might even say a pact of understanding has been formed between us and the million odd Christian Arabs living in Lebanon. At first they were very hesitant about admitting that Israel was extending aid to them. Today it is just the opposite. They insist that we publicize it and are publicizing it themselves. We do not ask them for thanks. We are helping them out of the goodness of our heart, for the simple reason that a minority must not be allowed to be destroyed by a majority. As it is written: "For you were sojourners in the land of Egypt". I regard Israel as the protector of the minorities in all of the Middle East. Why, only yesterday I received a visit from a delegation of Israeli Druse together with a Druse emissary from the Golan Heights. They requested that we hook up the Golan Heights to the national power grid. I promised to look into the matter at once and I have already spoken about it with the Minister of Energy and he is dealing with the matter. If it proves to be feasible, we will certainly do it. In my opinion the past decade has been a growing rapport between the Arabs living in Israel and ourselves. Unpleasant incident from time to time notwithstanding I believe that the two people can live side by side in mutual respect based on understanding, peace, economic and social progress and the building up of this country to a state of glory.



**45. Interview with Prime Minister Begin on Israel Radio, 12 September 1977.**

*In this interview, the Prime Minister spoke openly of Israel's peace initiative and of the Israeli peace plan which was presented to the United States whose approval Israel was seeking. This would be one of the aims of the visit of Foreign Minister Dayan to the U.S. Mr. Begin also felt that some Arab states may have decided to opt for a political, rather than a military, solution of the Middle East conflict. The Prime Minister hoped that direct talks could be arranged between the Foreign Ministers of Israel and the Arabs states, as suggested by Secretary Vance. The foreign policy parts of the interview follows:*

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, do you truly believe that the coming year will mark a turning-point in the peace process in the Middle East?

**A.** First of all, efforts have been made to make sure this is a year without war. We have assured the public we will do everything in our power, as individuals, as a government, to make sure no new war breaks out in the Middle East. And of course we are making every endeavour to implement what we have undertaken, though of course it is not all in our hands. There is also the enemy. We cannot know what is happening in his heart. We can of course be extremely cautious, on the alert, following events closely, keeping an eye open, for when all is said and done — the measure of our alertness is up to us.

This government has taken the initiative. We brought forward a proposal for a framework for a peace settlement to the U.S. President. We also proposed either the good offices of the United States, for setting up joint Arab-Israel commission with the Arab capitals — three or perhaps four if Lebanon participates — so that in this framework negotiations for a peace treaty can be conducted, or proximity talks, as proposed to us by the United States itself in 1972.

True, there was also a proposal which we mentioned during my visit to Washington: In September, the United Nations Assembly which will be attended by the Middle East Foreign Ministers.

They could meet. Sadat at the time accepted this proposal, but Assad cancelled it and Sadat apparently had no choice. In any case, he decided to accept Assad's view, and that left only one way open and to that too we gave our agreement, so that the peace process would continue; I refer to the talks of the Secretary of State on the one hand, and of the Middle East Foreign Ministers on the other.

The Secretary of State told us that there might perhaps be direct meetings. There would be an effort on the part of the Americans to bring about such meetings. Towards this end the government made an unprecedented effort — for the first time since the establishment of the state — for the first time since the Six-Day War, we drew up the draft of a full and complete peace treaty.

Ending the state of belligerency, establishing consular and diplomatic relations and so on. We have already given the draft to the Americans before the Foreign Minister leaves.

...I wish to stress that in my view the Arab states are interested in peace. No less — not more but certainly not less, than the state of Israel. I maintain that war is avoidable — but peace is inevitable. It is bound to come. It could take a longer period of time. That is quite possible. But the day of peace will come.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, could one conclude from your remarks that the Arab states have abandoned the military solution and today prefer the political process.

A. I believe, for the time being, that they too have given agreement to talks with the Secretary of State. We have to be very much on the alert over the possibility of aggression. I have stated that clearly. We are on the alert, prepared, and if we are attacked we shall defend ourselves. But defence also involves counter-attack and the Arabs should realize that.

Q. Mr. Begin, you speak of an Israeli peace initiative. In the final instance, whether there has been a draft peace treaty or not, there have been Israeli initiatives in the past. What distinguishes this initiative from those of the past?

A. I do not deny that there have been peace initiatives in the past. I am talking of a specific international document. A peace treaty. No such document has been presented in the past. This is a simple fact and I wish to stress it. I think it was a very good piece of work that we have produced. In any case it is an initiative that is being discussed today.

Q. Is the document you are referring to — the peace treaty drawn up by the government — acceptable to the Americans?

A. It is for this purpose that the Foreign Minister is about to visit the United States — to hold talks with the Secretary of State. We may very well get American agreement for large sections of it. Perhaps there will be certain sections of it that will certainly get American agreement. There may be certain clauses they will discuss with us from a different point of view. Everything is open. I want to stress that for the first time we have got U.S. agreement to the actual use of the term "Peace Agreement". The Americans agreed to it. The Egyptians agreed to it at one time. But then the Egyptians did not want to hear of a peace treaty and the Americans, as I recall myself from a visit to Washington ten years ago, asked us: Why do you need a peace treaty? Peace can be attained by other ways. Today a change has come about. When I was in Washington, I was given an American document "A comprehensive peace settlement", and we proposed adding the words "embodied in peace treaties" — and this was accepted by the Americans. And today that is a common Israeli-American position. It is not something you can just brush aside. It does mark a change compared to the past. And we shall see what they say concerning the contents of the document.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, in referring to a peace agreement I have not heard any reference on your part to the words 'withdrawals' or 'borders'.

A. No. I will not talk of those subjects now for a simple reason. When we presented the draft peace agreement it was accompanied by a letter in which we expressed our position on the territorial question. But we asked the Secretary of State to make sure that these points be brought only before the United States government and not to the knowledge of the Arabs. And he promised to accede to that request.

I only want to say that the position we have expressed in the letter accompanying the draft peace treaty is completely identical with what we told the President of the United States in a personal conversation we held at the White House... completely identical. In other words. It is the government's policy that has been worked out in detail and that has been conveyed to the President of the United States. And we stand by it.

Q. We have heard at least a question on a programme of Ministers based at least on what was said by the Foreign Minister Mr. Dayan in the Knesset, that if the Arab states were prepared to negotiate on the partition of Judea and Samaria, Israel would be prepared to hold talks with them on the subject, but if she is not prepared for that from the outset?

A. Today also I endorse his words. They were said with my approval and with my advance agreement. I want to quote exactly what Mr. Dayan said in the Knesset. He did

not say (as I have already pointed out) "If they present..." but "if only they were to present" (such a proposal). In other words he was stressing that they are not, and have not presented any such proposal. They do not even want to hear of what is called territorial partition in Judea and Samaria.

**Q.** One of the main subjects to be discussed by Moshe Dayan with the Secretary of State is that of settlements. This is against the background of, on the one hand, the repeated assertion of President Carter that settlements in the administered territories are illegal, and on the other hand, the desire and pressure from the Gush Emunim people to establish new settlements in the territories. How is the government going to cope with this problem?

**A.** On the issue of settlements, we do have differences of view. They are not new. They have existed for ten years. I know of a protest that the U.S. Ambassador conveyed to my predecessor, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, at one time, concerning certain settlement — and the protest was signed by the U.S. President. The former Prime Minister did not accept the protest, this thing has been going on for years. In exposing our point of view, did I leave any doubt in their minds as to our attitude to settlements, or to our being in favour of the right of the Jewish people to settle anywhere in Eretz Israel?...

...Could anyone imagine that a Jewish government would discriminate against Jews — everyone may live in places such as Bethlehem, Beth-el and Hebron, for example, but not Jews? That is the reason I gave them. We insist on our right, without a shadow of doubt. The previous government also established settlements, though according to a certain programme. We do not accept that programme known as the Allon plan.

Mr. Allon once came to me charging that I had said his plan was 'dead', so I could put it differently — it is past, and we are not working according to it. I state that openly.

When I was at the White House, I got a great welcome, but of course... both the President and I acknowledged there were differences of opinion between us...

**Q.** What will happen if Gush Emunim, for example, sets up a number of settlements, as they have repeatedly threatened to do — at the Jewish Agency for example? How will you deal with that problems?

**A.** Any question that begins with the word "if" I shall answer when the "if" disappears from the question.

**Q.** But the question began with "What would happen..."

**A.** There's no point in answering 'if' questions until the situation arises. That applies to all those questions. The government will reach decisions after the cabinet debate, as it proper.

**Q.** Do you not find it difficult, as Prime Minister, to implement a settlement policy? In other words, do you not find it difficult, now that you are in government and have to face the United States, to implement what you declared you believed in when you were in opposition, concerning settlement and other issues?

**A.** The difficulties existed beforehand as well, they are not now. For years now I have been a member of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee. I have heard of the protest from the U.S. President, and the reaction of the then Prime Minister to it, that perhaps the citizens of Israel had not heard about. This whole discussion between ourselves and U.S. is not new. President Carter was right to say that 'it's become a tradition with you', in other words — in the ten years since the Six-Day War, it has become a policy. The difficulties are not new.

Of course every issue must be given serious consideration. But why should I alter prin-

ciples in which I believe? I try to implement them. We are trying to carry out what we promised the public.

**Q.** Mr. Begin, to switch to relations with the opposition — you tend to use the word 'consensus' frequently: Why is a consensus so important to you?

**A.** I do not use the word consensus frequently. I want to say that I agree with what the Foreign Minister said at the Kfar Hamaccabia. On certain issues there is a full consensus among the Israeli people, and I believe it is important to express this — Israel will not return to the lines of 4 June 1967. Jerusalem will be whole and united, the capital of Israel. We shall not agree to the establishment of a Palestinian State in Judea and Samaria and in Gaza, and we shall not participate in any negotiations with the terrorist organization known as the P.L.O.

On these four issues there are no differences of opinion between the parties, apart from Rakah, that's a known fact. To some extent also Shelli — but not always.

If you noticed — only Rakah voted against the proposal concerning the P.L.O., while Shelli abstained. But even if we were to suppose that the two stood together on these political issues, we would have seven Knesset members out of 120 — with the other 113 in agreement over the four principles I have named.

I can see no reason why this agreement on these four such important issues should not be expressed immediately. If you were to ask Mr. Peres, Mr. Allon and Professor Yadin of the D.M.C. on these four issues, you would find that they have exactly the same attitude as we do. The issues are of the utmost importance, and from time to time we ask for an expression of general agreement. The opposition refused — that is its right. But never mind, we have a majority...

**Q.** When a statement is made, such as that of the Minister of Agriculture Ariel Sharon, on settlements, I take the liberty to assume that you do not feel very comfortable about it?

**A.** No, but that kind of thing can happen in any government... I want to say that the Minister of Agriculture is excellent in that capacity, he is truly interested in agriculture. But he is chairman of the Ministerial Committee on Settlement, and sometimes he makes statements, and he has corrected his statement. I have read the correction. It is better that he corrected it himself than that I should have to issue a correction. But that too is part of life. Nothing tragic has happened and there's no need to exaggerate.

**Q.** Mr. Begin, apart from peace — in which all the citizens of Israel believe — what would you, as Prime Minister, like to achieve?

**A.** To talk entirely realistically, first of all I want to prevent war, and secondly I want to see Israel approaching peace. Thirdly, I would like in the four-year term of this Knesset, to do away with poverty — especially where it is expressed in housing overcrowding, where you have families with 8 to 10 persons in two-room apartment — that is something which cannot be allowed to continue... I have always told my personal friends in the Alignment that, as Socialists, they should be ashamed for allowing such poverty to exist in Israel...

I would like to see conditions of decency, of honesty, of good manners, of mutual respect between human beings, of respect for women, children and old people, prevailing in our society. After all we have attained what was not attained by the generations — tens of generations — before us. We have attained a homeland of our own, a state with its own institutions — in other words, a Jewish State of which we and the entire Jewish People can be proud.

**46. Statement by Assistant Secretary of State Atherton on arms sale to Egypt, 15 September 1977.**

*The nature of the growing ties between Egypt and the U.S., and the increasing role that the United States was playing in Egypt, were cited as the main reasons for the decision of the Carter Administration to sell Egypt additional military transport aircraft as well as other equipment. The close cooperation between Egypt and the U.S. since the end of the Yom Kippur War was also noted as was the "historical leadership" role of Egypt in the Middle East. Mr. Atherton's full remarks to the House International Relations Sub-Committee on Europe and the Middle East follows:*

September 16, 1977

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

I am pleased to appear before you this afternoon to discuss the administration's proposal to sell certain items of military equipment to Egypt.

In early August, following a number of informal consultations with members, the Department of Defense sent letters of prenotification to the Congress outlining the Administration's intention to sell to Egypt C-130 transport aircraft and pilotless reconnaissance drones. On September 7, formal notification pursuant to section 36(B) of the act was sent to the Congress relative to the proposed sales.

Although this formal notification pertains only to the sale of transport aircraft and reconnaissance drones, these items are part of a package which also includes camera equipment for reconnaissance use, a hydrographic survey of the approaches to the Suez canal and a program of military training for Egyptian officers. I will address my remarks to those items requiring section 36(B) consideration, but I will be glad to answer questions you may have concerning the rest of the package.

Before discussing some of the specifics of the items proposed for sale to Egypt, I would like to say a few words about the historical and political background of this program.

Egypt, under President Sadat, and the United States have cooperated closely in the peace process initiated in the Middle East almost four years ago. Egypt continues to play a key role in the efforts currently under way to make significant progress in the near future to move the area towards peace. Egyptian policy serves the interests not only of Egypt, but of the Arab world, reflecting Egypt's historical leadership role in the region. In this context, President Sadat and his government are seeking to provide a better life for the Egyptian people, and economic development is at the very top of the Egyptian agenda for action. During the past few years, Egypt's contacts with the United States and Western Europe have expanded as various friendly countries have responded to the opportunity dramatically to improve relations with Egypt on all levels, including economic and commercial relations. A centerpiece of President Sadat's commitment to the future of his people, and the response of Egypt's friends, is the consultative group which, under the leadership of the World Bank, is coordinating the international response in support of Egypt's development plans.

This dramatic shift in Egyptian policy has opened new prospects for peace in the Middle East as well as new hope for future generations of Egyptians and for the Arab world generally. This policy, however, has had its cost, particularly in the field of military supply. In this respect, the Soviet Union has ceased its role as supplier of major equipment and, to

a large degree, has also ceased its maintenance support for the equipment which was previously provided. In these circumstances, the government of Egypt has sought to diversify its sources of supply for certain military equipment, as it seeks to meet perceived requirements for its own security. We believe that the proposals currently before you represent a measured response to some of these requirements, and are also a sign of confidence in Egypt's peace policies.

We firmly believe these sales are in the national interests of the United States. If we did not believe that, we would not be proposing them. The reasons are clear. Egypt since 1973 has opted for a negotiated peace in the Middle East and, as part of this policy, for improved relations with the United States. In doing so, it has sacrificed an assured source of military supply and assumed a risk to its immediate national security for the longer term gains of permanent peace. This is not a tenable position for any protracted period for any government. In the absence of demonstrable alternative sources of military supply, Egypt will be faced with the difficult choice of permitting the deterioration of its defense posture, diversifying its sources of supply, or returning to the Soviets as its sole source of supply. It has opted for seeking alternative sources. Given American interest in supporting Egypt's cooperation in our search for a genuine peace in the Middle East, we clearly have a major interest in helping Egypt meet its legitimate defense needs.

Now I would like to turn to a more detailed review of the items which are the subject of today's proceedings.

The Administration proposes to sell 14 C-130 aircraft to Egypt. The approximate value of this sale would be 184.4 million dollars. Together with the six C-130 aircraft sold to Egypt in early 1976, this will provide Egyptian air force with two ten-aircraft squadrons of modern transport aircraft; it may permit the retirement of some older Soviet-supplied transports that are known to be uneconomical to maintain and operate. The additional C-130 aircraft for Egypt would support the logistical and scheduling flexibility of the Egyptian armed forces — an important consideration given Egypt's strategic position as an African as well as a Middle Eastern power. It is anticipated that the first aircraft can be delivered in December 1978 with delivery to be completed in mid-1979.

The Egyptian air force has the ability to absorb the additional transport aircraft. The recommended program provides for training, adequate ground support equipment and spare parts for the first two years of operation. Accordingly, we anticipated no significant operational or maintenance problems in increasing the Egyptian air force level of this aircraft to 20.

With respect to the sale of remotely piloted vehicles (RPV's), this proposed sale is valued at approximately 66.5 million dollars. President Sadat requested RPV's as a generic system rather than identifying his preference for a specific model. Therefore, we are not certain which system the Egyptians eventually will select, nor have we discussed this with them pending congressional consideration of the proposed sale. However, in order to provide you with representative data, we have developed information for a program consisting of 12 Teledyne Ryan model 124-R (Firebee) remotely piloted drones. Such drones would enable Egypt to meet requirements for an unmanned airborne camera platform for reconnaissance to the midline of the Sinai buffer zone as authorized in the Sinai II accords, as well as to carry out reconnaissance missions along other frontiers.

The "Firebee" is a subsonic, radio-command controlled, single engine vehicle. The first of twelve such RPV's could be delivered approximately 14 months after agreement to a letter of offer and acceptance (LOA), and the remaining 11 vehicles would be ready within

the following four months.

The program envisaged includes maintenance, training and spares support sufficient to permit introduction of the system into the Egyptian Air Force inventory.

None of the equipment proposed for sale to Egypt materially will affect the regional balance of power. Rather, by improving Egypt's capability for collection of information and for movement of troops and supply, the items should enhance regional stability. The arms control and disarmament agency has examined the proposed sales and interposes no objections.

Both of the items I have discussed with you today will be sold to the Egyptians on an FMS cash basis.

I would be glad now to respond to any question you may have concerning either of these items or other matters related to the sale proposed by the Administration.

#### **47. Defence Ministry statement on evacuation of settlers, 28 September 1977.**

*Members of Gush Emunim have decided to establish a number of settlements in Samaria without getting prior government approval. On the night of 27–28 September the Israel Defence Forces were ordered by the Defence Minister, with the approval of Prime Minister Begin, to evacuate two groups from the Jericho and the Jenin area. On 28 September, after lengthy talks, Gush Emunim accepted the proposal of Mr. Begin to move into six military camps in the Samaria region rather than establish new settlements. Following is the Defence Ministry spokesman's statement:*

In accordance with the guidelines of the cabinet, the Minister of Defence intends to maintain law and order in the areas under the responsibility of his ministry. Accordingly, the Minister of Defence, Mr. Ezer Weizman, on the night of 27–28 September ordered I.D.F. troops to evacuate two groups of settlers, members of Gush Emunim, who attempted to settle in Judea and Samaria without permission from the Israeli government. One of the two groups of settlers evacuated on the orders of the Defence Minister was heading for Jericho and the other was attempting to establish its settlement at the police station at Sanur, near Jenin.

Evacuation of the settlers by the I.D.F. troops went smoothly and without any hitches.

#### **48. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan in Ha'aretz, 29 September 1977.**

*In late September, the focus of Israel–U.S. talks was still the procedure to be followed in the re-convened Geneva Conference, the issue of Palestinian representation and the agenda. Mr. Dayan said that the U.S. was insisting on Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Israel's refusal to agree to any move that could be in any way construed as leading to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Extracts from the interview follow:*

The American demands to include the subject of a Palestinian entity in the agenda of the Geneva Conference, and that an independent Palestinian delegation participate at the conference, are the points of contention with the United States, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Dayan said in an interview with "Ha'aretz". In this context he said that the main difficulty was that what the United States was striving for was that Israel should leave the West Bank and that an independent entity and state should be set up there. Israel would not be a partner even to any procedural move that could be construed as leading to the setting up of a Palestinian State, Mr. Dayan said. He also said that it had been agreed between the parties that the negotiations at the Geneva Conference would take place bilaterally—After the ceremony and that Israel would seek American assurances that there would be no departures from the procedures to be established at the opening of the conference.

In reply to my question, Mr. Dayan said that two subjects had been clarified in his talks over here: Palestinian representation and the joint Arab delegation. On the latter issue — the delegation — it was understood that the negotiations would be bi-lateral. The distinction was simple and clear-cut, Mr. Dayan said. After the ceremonial part, negotiations would be conducted separately with each state. What was termed 'negotiations for a peace treaty' should be bi-lateral, between Israel and the individual states. On this there were no differences with the Americans and Israel had gained the impression that after (their) meetings with the Egyptians and the Jordanians, the Americans had got "clearance" on this issue.

In reply to my question what Israel would do if, for example, someone from among the Arabs got up at Geneva and demanded that a discussion on the future of Jerusalem be held or on some other subject, in contravention of what had been agreed, Mr. Dayan said that we would have to get an American undertaking in advance that would prevent such departures (from agreed procedure).

Three points were raised on the issue of Palestinian representation, Mr. Dayan said:

A. The most difficult of all was the question of the delegation. We fear that not only the Arabs but the Americans as well would like to see the Palestinians constituting a delegation of their own. "If we agree to an independent Palestinian delegation, this means that we have a partner for talks on the establishment of a state. We are opposed to this demand" — but Mr. Dayan does not deny that it still exists.

B. The second point is — what should be discussed? The Americans would like the agenda to include the Palestinian entity, but even if there is no independent Palestinian delegation at the Geneva Conference, it would be impossible (for Israel) to agree to this demand.

C. The third point — the PLO want some indication, even symbolic that its own delegates are being invited to the conference, but they want to decide who those delegates are to be. They want to be invited as the representatives of the Palestinians, without any connection with other participants from the West Bank. They do not want to get in by the back door, and they do not want anybody else to see to their interests.

Mr. Dayan said that he did not feel that the Americans were keen to be the defenders of this demand. Perhaps there had been a certain cooling-off towards the PLO and the pressure that this organization recognise Resolution 242 had eased up — perhaps so that the Americans would not have to give it legitimization for the Geneva Conference.

When I asked Mr. Dayan whether there had been any erosion in the American position regarding Resolution 242, he said that he had sensed no tendency among the Americans towards any such change. He could not see how the Geneva Conference could be convened on any other basis than Resolution 338 (which refers to 242).



"The Americans are still acting in accordance with Mr. Begin's preliminary request, which was to deal with procedure now and leave the substance for later. When Mr. Vance came to Israel, he insisted that we deal with the substance, and we filled up papers, but at present the Americans are dealing with procedure because they are 'stuck' on the opening. What happens the next day is a weighty question, and procedure certainly intermingles with contents. The alternative the Americans now have is either to discuss the substance now and get stranded on a reef, or to confine themselves to procedural questions for the time being."

In reply to a question on U.S. guarantees, Mr. Dayan said that the possible nature of such guarantees was a question that could be examined prior to the Geneva Conference (though it was one of substance) and he assumed that it would be clarified.

#### **49. Toast by Prime Minister Begin in honor of President Torrijos of Panama, 29 September 1977.**

*Shortly after initiating the U.S.-Panama agreement for the settlement of the Panama Canal issue, President Torrijos of Panama embarked on a world tour that also took him to Israel. At a state dinner in his honour, Prime Minister Begin recalled the excellent ties between Israel and Panama and hailed the recent agreement on the Canal as the best example for the settlement of disputes between nations. Excerpts follow:*

'...I wish to express my sincere pleasure at welcoming among us the Chief of the government of Panama and the members of his party. This visit is fraught with meaning for us, signifying as it does the ties of friendship and cooperation existing between our two countries...

The special significance of this visit is in its timing, several weeks after Your Excellency, together with the U.S. President, participated in a historical event in the life of the America continent: The signature of the new agreement on the Panama Canal — an example for the settlement of disputes between nations, with good will overcoming differences of opinion among the international community.

Permit me, Your Excellency, to express my sincere appreciation of your own part in the achievement of this noble goal. The supreme qualities of political leadership demonstrated in the process contributed to the successful realization of Panama's aims by fruitful negotiation among the parties directly concerned with the dispute.

We ourselves, who stand at the very outset of our renaissance as a free sovereign people, are confronted by a regrettable dispute with our neighbouring countries. We see in this (your)act a striking example for the way to be adopted in order to obtain that peace we so fervently seek, after hundreds of years in exile and after having suffered the most horrible Holocaust ever experienced by mankind. We shall know therefore to ensure and establish the Jewish People's right to free and sovereign existence. We want peace to reign in the Middle East, with victory over hunger and poverty as the common aim of the region's people.

It has been a constant source of encouragement for us that this our endeavour has, throughout the years, enjoyed the understanding and support of the government of Pan-

ama, and the amical relations between our countries have resulted in fruitful ties and mutual cooperation in the spheres of culture, science and technology. It is our endeavour that this cooperation should be translated into support by Panama of Israel's just struggle. Your Excellency's brilliant remarks during our meeting yesterday highlight my hope that such support may be forthcoming in the international arena.

Our talks encompassed various fields of bilateral relations, in an atmosphere of full appreciation of the problems facing us, and the firm resolve to work together in the search for positive solutions. Our conclusions are bound to guide the activity of the bodies who are charged with forging the tools required for the realization of our aims.

...I have no doubt that you will carry with you not only the image of this ancient country, fraught with immense spiritual significance for our culture — but also the evidence of the effort made by the people of Israel to realize political re-birth in its country. May you also take with you a message of friendship and brotherhood to your great people. I raise my glass in a toast to the happiness of the people of Panama and the success of its great leader, General Omar Torrijos Herrera.'

#### **50. Joint U.S.–Soviet statement on the Middle East, 1 October 1977.**

*The Middle East part of Mr. Carter's press conference was devoted to the question of Palestinian representation in the peace talks. While stating that the U.S. would not deal with the PLO as long as it adheres to its position denying Israel's right to exist, the President warned that there could be no peace in the Middle East without an adequate Palestinian representation in Geneva. On another matter he told the press conference that the Soviet Union has shown a cooperative attitude and have been flexible in their attitudes. While the President was referring to SALT and other issues of U.S.–Soviet relations, on 1 October it became clear that he was also referring to the Middle East. Excerpts from the 29 September press conference follow:*

September 30, 1977

**Question:** There have been a lot of confusing statements from the White House and from leaders who have seen you recently on where exactly the United States stands in terms of Palestinians, PLO participation in a Geneva Peace Conference if one comes about. Can you really clarify this point?

**The President:** ... What we are trying to do now is, as a first and immediate goal is to bring all the parties in the Mideast dispute to Geneva for a conference. We are dealing with Israel directly; we are dealing directly with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. We are trying to act as an intermediary between Israel and each one of those Arab countries that border their own country.

There are some differences among the Arab nations which we are trying to resolve concerning a unified Arab delegation or individual Arab delegations, and the format which might be used to let the Palestinian views be represented.

At the same time, we have a further complicating factor in that we are joint chairmen of the Geneva Conference along with the Soviet Union. So in the call for the conference and the negotiations preceding the format of the conference we have to deal with the Soviet

Union as well. So on top of all that, and perhaps preeminent in my own mind, is we are not an idle observer or bystander, or mediator. We have a vital national interest in the ultimate peace in the Middle East. It is obvious to me that there can be no Middle Eastern peace settlement without adequate Palestinian representation.

The Arab countries maintain that the PLO is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian interests. The Israelis say they won't deal with the Palestinians, certainly not the well-known PLO members, because they have been identified in the past as committed to the destruction of the nation of Israel.

So we are trying to get an agreement between the Israelis and the Arab countries with widely divergent views about the format of the meeting, and also who would be welcomed to the conference to represent the Palestinians.

This is something that is still in the negotiating stage and I cannot predict a final outcome. We have no national position on exactly who would represent the Palestinians or exactly what form the Arab group would take in which the Palestinians would be represented. I just can't answer that question yet because the question has not been answered in my mind.

**Question:** Does the United States recognize — “Recognize” is the wrong word — but accept the PLO as a representative of the Palestinians?

**The President:** We have pledged to the Israelis in the past, and I have confirmed the pledge, that we will not negotiate with, nor deal directly with the PLO until they adopt United Nations Resolution 242 as a basis for their involvement, which includes a recognition of the right of Israel to exist. We have let this be known to the PLO leaders through various intermediaries, through the United Nations, leaders in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, and so forth. They know our position.

If the PLO should go ahead and say, “We endorse UN Resolution 242,” we don't think it adequately addresses the Palestinian issue because it only refers to refugees and we think we have a further interest in that, that would suit us okay.

We would then begin to meet with and to work with the PLO. Obviously they don't represent a nation. It is a group that represents, certainly don't think they are the exclusive representatives of the Palestinians. Obviously there are Mayors, for instance, and local officials in the West Bank areas who represent Palestinians. They may or may not be members of the PLO. So we are not trying to define an exact formula that we would prescribe for others. We are trying to find some common ground on which the Israelis and Arabs might get together to meet in Geneva.

I think, by the way, that both groups, the Israelis and the Arabs, have come a long way. They are genuinely searching for a formula by which they can meet. They want peace. I think they are to be congratulated already because in the past number of years they have made very strong and provocative statements against one another, and now to move toward an accommodation is a difficult thing for them and we are trying not to make it any more difficult.

**Question:** Mr. President, what are the assurances given to the PLO in the event of accepting 242?

**The President:** If they accept UN 242 and the right of Israel to exist, then we will begin discussions with the leaders of the PLO. We are not giving them any further assurance of that because we are not trying to prescribe, as I said, the status of the PLO itself in any Geneva Conference. But it would give us a means to understand the special problems of

the Palestinians. And, as you know, many of the Israeli — some of the Israeli leaders have said that they recognize that the Palestinian question is one of the three major elements. But I can't and have no inclination to give the PLO any assurances other than we will begin to meet with them and to search for some accommodation and some reasonable approach to the Palestinian question if they adopt 242 and recognize publicly the right of Israel to exist.

#### **51. Press conference with President Carter, 29 September 1977.**

*The fruits of the U.S.-Soviet discussions on the Middle East were contained in their joint statement that called for the resumption of the Geneva conference no later than December 1977 with both the super-powers serving as co-chairmen. They called for the participation of all parties, including "those of the Palestinian people", and while the statement did not mention Resolution 242 by name, it spelled out the various elements of that resolution. Israel and Egypt were dismayed at the statement and at the U.S. position of restoring to the Soviet Union a major say in the peace talks. Other Arab capitals expressed satisfaction with the statement. Text:*

Having exchanged views regarding the unsafe situation which remains in the Middle East, United States Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, A.A. Gromyko have the following statement to make on behalf of their countries, which are Co-chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East:

1. Both governments are convinced that vital interests of the peoples of this area as well as the interests of strengthening peace and international security in general urgently dictate the necessity of achieving as soon as possible a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This settlement should be comprehensive, incorporating all parties concerned and all questions.

The United States and The Soviet Union believe that, within the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem, all specific questions of the settlement should be resolved, including such key issues as withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict; The resolution of the Palestinian question including ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; Termination of the state of war and establishment of normal peaceful relations on the basis of mutual recognition of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence.

The two governments believe that, in addition to such measures for ensuring the security of the borders between Israel and the neighboring Arab states as the establishment of demilitarized zones and the agreed stationing in them of UN troops or observers, international guarantees of such borders as well as of the observance of the terms of the settlement can also be established, should the contracting parties so desire. The United States and the Soviet Union are ready to participate in these guarantees, subject to their constitutional processes.

2. The United States and the Soviet Union believe that the only right and effective way for achieving a fundamental solution to all aspects of the Middle East problem in its entirety is negotiations within the framework of the Geneva Peace Conference, specially

convened for these purposes, with participation in its work of the representatives of all the parties involved in the conflict including those of the Palestinian people, and legal and contractual formalization of the decisions reached at the conference.

In their capacity as Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, the U.S. and the USSR affirm their intention through joint efforts and in their contacts with the parties concerned to facilitate in every way the resumption of the work of the conference not later than December 1977. The Co-Chairmen note that there still exist several questions of a procedural and organizational nature which remain to be agreed upon by the participants to the conference.

3. Guided by the goal of achieving a just political settlement in the Middle East and of eliminating the explosive situation in this area of the world, the U.S. and the USSR appeal to all the parties in the conflict to understand the necessity for careful consideration of each other's legitimate rights and interests and to demonstrate mutual readiness to act accordingly.

## **52. Israel government reaction to joint U.S.-Soviet statement on the Middle East, 2 October 1977.**

*In its reaction, the government of Israel stated clearly that the joint statement did not mention the expression peace treaty, it also failed to mention Resolutions 242 and 338 which served as the basis for the 1973 Geneva Conference. Israel felt that the statement, which however did spell out in detail the subjects for discussion in Geneva, would only harden the position of the Arab states. Israel felt that the statement was ill-timed and would only make the peacemaking process more difficult. For its part, Egypt felt that the introduction of the Soviets into the peacemaking process was contrary to the policy pursued by the U.S. since the end of the Yom Kippur War when it encouraged Israel and Egypt to move towards peace in a series of bilateral interim agreement, achieved through U.S. mediation without any Soviet participation in the process. Text of the Israeli statement:*

1. The Soviet Union's demand for Israel to withdraw to the 4 June 1967 lines, which contradicts the real meaning of Security Council Resolution 242, is known to all.

2. Although the United States and Israel Governments agreed on 19 July 1977 that the purpose of the negotiations at Geneva is "an overall peace settlement that will find expression in a peace treaty," the expression "peace treaty" is not mentioned at all in the Soviet-American statement.

3. There is no reference in the statement to Resolutions 242 and 338, despite the fact that until now the United States has repeatedly stated that these resolutions constitute the sole basis for the convening of the Geneva Conference.

4. There can be no doubt that this statement, published at a time when discussions are being held regarding the convening of the Geneva Conference, must necessarily have the effect of hardening even more the positions of the Arab countries, and of making the peacemaking process in the Middle East more difficult.

5. As the Prime Minister has stated, Israel will continue to strive for free and open negotiations with its neighbors, aimed at achieving the signing of peace treaties with them.

**53. Statement by Prime Minister Begin on remarks by Professor Brzezinski, 3 October 1977.**

*The issue of Israel's security needs and the meaning of Israel's security has long been one of the items on which there was disagreement between Israel and the U.S. In an interview on Canadian television, Professor Brzezinski was asked about Israel's sensitivity to its security and its fear of a sudden attack. He replied that if Israel would find itself facing a mortal danger, the United States would certainly come to its aid. Prime Minister Begin reacted to reports of this interview which appeared in Israel, in the following manner:*

This morning I heard a summary of the statement made by Professor Z. Brzezinski, National Security Adviser to President Carter, in the course of a television interview with the Canadian CTV:

According to the published press report he said that if Israel were "mortally threatened", the United States would certainly come to Israel's aid.

The question is who will decide when Israel faces such a deadly peril. Indeed, only very recently we had the experience — and it was a harsh one — of mortal danger directly facing the Christian minority in Southern Lebanon.

During my visit to Washington in July this year, I handed to Professor Brzezinski documents dating back to the thirties, testifying to the efforts of his own father to assist persecuted, condemned Jews in Nazi Germany.

We are charged with the duty — and we are going to carry it out — to ensure that never again will anybody speak with pity about persecuted Jews, who are no more. But that everybody will respect a living Jewish people, free and independent.

**54. Israel-U.S. working paper on The Geneva Conference, 5 October 1977.**

*Since the publication of the Joint U.S.-Soviet statement on the Middle East, Israeli leaders have made strenuous efforts to realign Israel's policy with that of the United States. American suggestions that Israel was well aware of the nature and scope of the U.S.-Soviet discussions on the Middle East that resulted in the joint statement were denied by Israel. In New York, Foreign Minister Dayan met for hours with President Carter and Secretary Vance in an effort to resolve the Israel-U.S. differences, and finally emerged with an understanding which became known as the Israel-U.S. working paper on Geneva. In this paper, Israel in effect rejected the U.S.-Soviet statement, insisted on Resolution 242 as the basis for talks but said that 242 did not mean territorial withdrawal; the PLO was not mentioned and there would be no Palestinian state. Syria at once rejected the working paper. Egypt reserved judgement.*

**Working paper on suggestions for the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference.**

1. The Arab parties will be represented by a unified Arab delegation, which will include Palestinian Arabs. After the opening session, the conference will split into working groups.

2. The working groups for the negotiation and conclusion of peace treaties will be formed as follows:

- A. Egypt-Israel
- B. Jordan-Israel
- C. Syria-Israel
- D. Lebanon-Israel\*

3. The West Bank and Gaza issues will be discussed in a working group to consist of Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian Arabs.

4. The solution of the problem of the Arab refugees and of the Jewish refugees will be discussed in accordance with terms to be agreed upon.

5. The agreed basis for the negotiations at the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East are U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

6. All the initial terms of reference of the Geneva Peace Conference remain in force, except as may be agreed by the parties.

## **55. Statement to the United Nations General Assembly by Foreign Minister Dayan, 10 October 1977.**

*Following the establishment of direct contact between Israel and Egypt, and after the agreement between Israel and the United States on the working paper for resuming the Geneva Conference, Foreign Minister Dayan used the opportunity of the annual address before the General Assembly to reiterate Israel's position on Resolution 242, the Geneva Conference, refugees and the issue of settlements. He stressed the Israeli belief that the heart of the problem was the refusal of the Arabs to recognize the right of Israel to national sovereignty and suggested that the only road to peace was that of direct negotiations with no prior conditions. Excerpts from the speech follow:*

### **Human Rights**

...despite intense strains and provocations, Israel has succeeded in maintaining a free, open and multiracial society in which the dignity of man and the rule of law are held supreme.

...little progress has been made in implementing the humanitarian principles of the Helsinki Declaration. Regrettably, there has been no improvement in the situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union during the past year...

The Government of Israel once again calls on the Soviet Union to permit those Jews who wish to do so, to leave in order to go to Israel to join their people and their families.

May I again raise the sorry plight of the Jewish community in Syria. This community does not enjoy such basic human rights as freedom of movement and the right to be reunited with their families abroad. There can be no valid reason for the Government of Syria to hold these five thousand innocent people as hostages.

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\*All the parties agreed that Lebanon may join the conference when it so requests.

## **Disarmament**

In the past three years, an estimated \$7.5 billion in arms supplies have been delivered, by East and West, to Arab countries in the vicinity of Israel. In addition, about \$22 billion worth of arms was contracted for by Arab States for delivery from the end of 1976 onwards. Israel is ready to enter into an agreement on arms limitation with all the States in the Middle East.

In another crucial aspect of disarmament, Israel has frequently called on its Arab neighbours to join it in direct negotiations with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East. Indeed, on this issue, as on others, Foreign Minister Fahmi has deliberately misled this Assembly. Israel firmly believes that such negotiations should lead to the conclusion of a formal, contractual, multilateral convention between all the States of the region.... Unfortunately, the Arab States have totally rejected this call by Israel which, after all, is in the interest of all the people of the Middle East.

## **Terror**

It is regrettable that Arab States have played and continue to play a central role in encouraging international terror. It is to Arab airports that hijacked planes are directed by terrorists to find safe destinations. The recent Japan Airlines case is a classic example. The kidnappers and murderers of public figures in Germany are graduates of PLO courses. No cause can justify or condone terrorism. It is a criminal activity, totally indiscriminate in its effects, which by design strikes at the innocent and the defenceless. The issue is therefore a fundamental one for the international community. The attitude this organization takes on the question of terrorism is a clear reflection of its moral strength and international responsibility. So far, the record of the United Nations in combatting terrorism has been dismal. Not once has the Security Council convened to condemn terrorists and hijackers.

## **The Middle East**

I noted with interest that after my Egyptian colleague talked with the President and the Secretary of State in Washington on 22 September, he announced to the press that for the first time Egypt was prepared to accept Israel as a Middle Eastern country and to live in peace in this area. It saddened me, therefore, that before this Assembly on 28 September, Mr. Fahmi chose to make a personal attack on my Prime Minister, to vilify Zionism and to launch a move to isolate Israel in this forum. He also made peace conditional on an end to immigration to Israel, and openly threatened war... Mr. Fahmi's doubletalk does not enhance Egypt's credibility, and is prejudicial to the prospects of peace in the Middle East.

Israel will never limit immigration. Zionism is the lifeblood of Israel. We will do our utmost to achieve peace and to prevent war...

We have been reminded that Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine was not fulfilled. True: but the Arab States themselves voted against the Resolution, obstructed its implementation and destroyed it by force of arms. For the past 30 years they have been guilty of aggression against Israel. After every war, we proposed peace, but in vain...

Many delegates have referred nostalgically to the 1967 Armistice lines, and seem to see an Israeli withdrawal to them as a complete solution to all the problems of the Middle East. But, if the 1967 lines are the answer to the problem, the fact is that peace was not achieved in the years between 1949 and 1967, when Israel's frontiers were at the 1967 lines. During that period the Arab States refused to negotiate peace, as they were pledged to do under



the Armistice Agreements which they signed in 1949. The PLO, an instrument of war for the destruction of Israel, was created in 1964, when Israel was still behind the 1967 lines.

There has been much talk about the territories held by Israel since the Six-Day War. But nothing has been said about the reasons for that war: nothing of President Nasser's blockade of the Straits of Tiran and, his public undertakings to annihilate Israel; nothing of Egypt's movement of forces leading up to the war; nothing of how King Hussein ignored our advice, passed on to him by General Odd Bull of the United Nations, when he joined in the attack on Israel with the forces of Egypt and Syria. We did not plan to go to war. We fought to defend ourselves from the grim fate promised us.

In 1973, Syria and Egypt again launched a war against Israel. After their defeat, the Geneva Peace Conference was set up, in the framework of which two Disengagement Agreements were reached with Egypt and Syria in 1974, and an Interim Agreement was made with Egypt in 1975.

Since then, Israel has not ceased to indicate its readiness to resume the peace negotiations at Geneva on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338.

### **Resolution 242**

In view of the many inaccurate constructions which have been put on Resolution 242, let us be quite clear what that resolution does and does not say.

It does *not* require Israel to withdraw unilaterally from territories it occupied in 1967. It does *not* call upon Israel to leave all of those territories. It does *not* make peace negotiations contingent upon such withdrawal. It does *not* fix boundaries.

What it *does* require is negotiations between the parties to arrive at an agreed peace treaty. The wording of the Resolution makes it perfectly clear that new boundaries are to be determined between the States of the region. The statement that "secure and recognized boundaries" must be negotiated implies that the previous boundaries were not secure and not recognized. The fact that new boundaries are to be reached can also be inferred from the fact that Arab and Soviet pressure for the inclusion of a reference to "withdrawal from all the territories" was unsuccessful. To quote Mr. Joseph Sisco, who was the US Assistant Secretary of State at the time Resolution 242 was adopted:

*"That Resolution did not say 'withdrawal to the pre-June lines'. The Resolution said that the parties must negotiate to achieve agreement on the so-called final secure and recognized borders. In other words, the question of the final borders is a matter of negotiations between the parties."*

This is still our position. We must establish new boundaries, not return to the old ones. We must negotiate permanent boundaries which will afford Israel security. According to Resolution 242, the peace settlement must include the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area." The settlement is therefore to be reached between States and not to involve the participation of any organization whatsoever.

Resolution 242 makes no mention whatsoever of the PLO. The PLO is a terrorist organization whose record is one of deliberate and indiscriminate atrocities against innocent civilians, including women and children.

The PLO is governed by the "Palestinian National Covenant" of 1964, as amended in

1968, and reconfirmed, as recently as in March of this year, by the "Palestinian National Council" in Cairo.

Article 6 of this Covenant calls for the expulsion of the vast majority of the Jewish population from our country. In Article 15, it calls for the elimination of Zionism. In Article 19, it calls, in effect, for the destruction of the State of Israel. In Article 20, it makes the preposterous assertion that "claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history." In Article 21, it declares that "all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine" are rejected — that is, any plan which falls short of the destruction of Israel. There is not a sovereign State in this organization that would negotiate with a body calling for its destruction.

Many delegations have proposed the establishment of a Palestinian State governed by the PLO in the West Bank and Gaza. Again, this is but a futile exercise in wishful thinking, totally unacceptable to us, ignoring as it does the language of 242 and the basic facts on the ground. A PLO mini-State in the West Bank, which could not be viable in itself, would be a base for attempts to destroy Israel. One has only to consult a map and the political programme of the PLO to realize this.

The provisions of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 were accepted by Israel as the basis of negotiations towards peace. We accepted Security Council Resolution 242. We did not accept an amended Security Council Resolution 242. Even if such an amendment were feasible, which it is not, Security Council Resolution 242 derives its strength and authority from the fact that it has been accepted by the States party to the conflict.

Moreover, the United States regards Resolutions 242 and 338 as the exclusive basis for a settlement of the conflict. The Memorandum of Agreement between Israel and the USA on the Geneva Peace Conference, signed on 1 September 1975, declares in Article 4 that the US "will oppose and, if necessary, vote against any initiatives in the Security Council to alter adversely the terms of reference of the Geneva Peace Conference, or to change Resolutions 242 and 338 in ways which are incompatible with their original purpose." This position was reaffirmed by the United States only a few days ago in a joint statement with Israel.

### **The Geneva Conference**

Israel is ready to resume negotiations at Geneva for the achievement of true, contractual and effective peace treaties, including the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Arab States.

There can be no participation of any additional State, group or organization at the Geneva Peace Conference without the agreement of all the initial participants. All the negotiations should be conducted on a bilateral basis.

Through the good offices of the United States, we have conveyed suggestions of the substantive and not merely the procedural issues. First, we have provided a draft text for a full peace treaty in all its aspects. Second, we have supplied details of our approach in respect of discussion and negotiations on the various issues.

In its turn, this part is made up of two elements: first, a presentation of some of the main questions involved in a peace agreement between ourselves and each of our neighbours, such as Israel's security, guaranteeing freedom of navigation in all international waterways, security of the Jordan River sources in the north, a basis for coexistence with the Palestinian Arabs in the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria, and other relevant topics — in other words, the questions which we believe we must contend with, if we

are to sign a final peace agreement between ourselves and each of the neighbouring Arab States.

The second element comprises our ideas for resolving these questions. In our view, there should be complete normalization of relations, including diplomatic relations, trade and cultural ties. We have suggested modalities, including demilitarized zones and other arrangements.

In addition, there remains the cardinal principle that the negotiations be conducted without prior conditions or commitments. This principle means not only that neither side obligates the other to agree in advance to any condition whatsoever, but also that all issues and areas are open to negotiation. We, for our part, will be completely open and sincere in listening to, discussing and examining the proposals of the other parties.

To illustrate this, we believe that the settlement concerning Judaea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip should be based on our living together with the Palestinian Arabs in those areas, and not on partition of the territory.

For ten years, between 1967 and 1977, the Government of Israel was committed to territorial concessions in return for genuine peace, and this implied the re-division of the area — but to no avail. Now our view is that re-division is not the answer. Nowhere is it possible to draw a dividing line which will satisfy not only the security, but also the historical, economic and social needs of all sides. Bethlehem, a satellite town of Jerusalem, dependent on Jerusalem for its tourist trade, and indeed its very existence, cannot be cut off from the Holy City. Mount Scopus, the site of the Hebrew University and the Hadassah Hospital, cannot be separated from Israel. Are the Arabs in Gaza once again to be bottled up in an intolerably narrow strip of land, unable to get out without passing an international frontier?

No. The model for the future must be united Jerusalem, where, since 1967, Jews and Arabs have proved that they can live together harmoniously to their mutual benefit, where all residents enjoy freedom of movement in all parts of the Holy City and where freedom of access to the Holy Places is assured for all. There is no room, and no need, for barbed wire any more...

...I should like to point out that we have re-examined the positions of Jordan, and of the Palestinian Arabs, and we have found no inclination on the part of any of them for a solution based on the re-division of Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

## Settlements

The criticism which has been directed against Israel in respect of the establishment of settlements in Judaea and Samaria is unfounded. The settlements are legal.

Under International Law, neither Jordan nor any other Arab State has any sovereign territorial rights in the West Bank or in any other part of what was Mandatory Palestine in 1948, when the United Kingdom surrendered the Mandate. No state today has any claims of sovereignty, to what was Mandatory Palestine, that are better than or even equal to Israel's claims. The Arabs States rejected the UN partition resolution and, in violation of the UN Charter, used force in an attempt to prevent its implementation. The Arab use of force in 1948 was an act of aggression and not of self-defence:

*"...An armed struggle is taking place in Palestine as a result of the unlawful invasion by a number of states of the territory of Palestine which does not form part of the territory of any of the states whose armed forces have invaded it."*

(Mr. Tarasenko, Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic,  
Security Council, 27 May 1948)

No rights accrued to them from that act, and they were, in fact, subject to the restrictions that International Law imposes on a conquering and occupying army.

Jordan's annexation of Judaea and Samaria, early in 1950, was never recognized by any state besides Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The US State Department, at a press conference on 29 July 1977, confirmed that there are legal problems over the sovereign rights of Jordan in the West Bank. In view of this illegal annexation of the West Bank, the Fourth Geneva Convention is not applicable.

But, even if the laws of belligerent occupation were applicable, these rules contain no restrictions on the freedom of persons to take up residence in the area involved. The Fourth Geneva Convention bans forcible transfers, not voluntary acts of individuals taking up residence in the areas of the West Bank. No Arab inhabitants have been displaced by the establishment of these Jewish settlements. Not a single Arab resident of Judea and Samaria has been made homeless as a result of these peaceful villages. Above all, it is unacceptable to us that Jews should be prohibited from living in any part of their ancestral Land.

Let me make one point clear: The settlements will not decide the final borders between Israel and its neighbours. The borders will be decided upon in negotiations between Israel and its neighbours. The settlements are by no means an obstacle to peace — because, if they were, we should have had peace years ago.

## **Refugees**

One of the central problems that must be solved in a peace settlement is the problem of the refugees.

Security Council Resolution 242 refers to “refugees,” not “Arab refugees.” It covers both Jewish and Arab refugees. When the resolution was being drafted, a Soviet attempt to restrict it to “Arab refugees” failed.

The origin of the Palestinian Arab refugee problem was the Arab rejection of the UN partition resolution and the war which they declared against the State of Israel one day after its establishment. The responsibility is therefore theirs. Had the Arabs accepted the resolution, there would not have been any refugee problems.

Furthermore, because of the wars conducted by the Arab States against Israel, Jews who lived for thousands of years in Arab lands were forced to leave, abandoning all their property and possessions. For about 590,000 Arab refugees, there were 600,000 Jewish refugees from Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Egypt, Libya and the rest of North Africa.

Refugees in other parts of the world have been successfully integrated in the national community to which they belong. The only exception to the general rule is the situation of the Arab refugees. The Arab States have refused to absorb or integrate their brethren into their respective societies. The Arab States have made the “restoration” of the “legitimate rights” of the refugees — namely, their return to Israel — their central demand.

This demand constitutes a serious distortion of the realities of the refugee problem. We do not intend to send Jews back to Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Yemen and other Arab countries, in order that they may be hanged in the public squares of Baghdad, and be deprived of their human rights and become third-class citizens, imprisoned in ghettos as in Syria today. We will not send them back in order to take Arab refugees in their place. The fact is that an exchange of population has taken place between Israel and the Arab countries.

The differences between Israel and the Arab States is that while we in Israel from the

outset integrated all the Jewish refugees into our society, the Arab States deliberately perpetuated the "refugee status" of their own brethren, in order to use them as a political weapon against Israel. The Arab demand for the return of the refugees to Israel, coupled with proposals for the establishment of a Palestinian State, is calculated to bring about the destruction of Israel. The refugees should be resettled and integrated into the Arab societies in which they now live. In any peace settlement, specific provisions should be made to enable all refugees to find accommodation, employment and adequate compensation.

In any discussion of reparations for the refugees, Israel will raise the question of reparations for Jewish refugees from Arab lands, and insist that all their claims be settled within the framework of the final peace agreement.

### **The Heart of the Problem**

There is only one road along which it is possible to move toward peace, and that is the road of direct negotiations with no pre-conditions. No conflict in the world has ever been resolved without the parties to the conflict negotiating face to face. Our conflict is not different.

The heart of the problem is the Arab refusal to recognize the right of Israel to national sovereignty in the ancient historic Land of the Jewish People. This is the heart of the problem, and until it is overcome, the obstacles to a just and durable peace will remain.

The developments of recent days and the possibility of a resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference nonetheless give room for guarded optimism, which could turn into grounds for great hope. For our part, we are prepared to embark on a common effort, long and challenging as it may be, to negotiate a final agreement to live in peace and security.

### **56. Statement to the Knesset by Foreign Minister Dayan, 13 October 1977.**

*Upon his return to Israel, Foreign Minister Dayan replied in the Knesset, on behalf of the government, to urgent motion for the agenda tabled by the Labour Party opposition regarding the political situation. The Foreign Minister dealt with the joint U.S.-Soviet statement on the Middle East, with Israel's diplomatic efforts to blunt this statement, the Israel-U.S. working paper and finally with the various options open for Geneva and Israel's attitude regarding the participation of Palestinians in Geneva. The Foreign Minister described in detail the recent diplomatic moves and especially the various clauses of the working paper with the U.S. which he thought was a good document. At the conclusion of the debate the subject was removed from the agenda. Text of the statement.*

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Knesset,

I attach much importance to this debate — not its rhetorical aspect, nor the barbs it will engender, but the substantive, fundamental issue, for the entire House. All the parties have said and are saying not only that they want a peace agreement but that they want to attend the Geneva Conference or, more precisely, to participate in the resumption of the sessions of the Geneva Conference, and I am certain that they are sincere in saying this — and the question is: How do we get there, what may we do, what must we not do, when the resumption of the Geneva Conference is proposed?

I should first of all like to get rid of one subject — an important subject, which in fact

was the reason the Alignment requested today's special Knesset session, although we hardly heard a word about it: Namely, the American-Soviet statement of 1 October 1977. This was a very grave statement. It was grave for two reasons. Both because of its content and, especially, because for the first time the U.S. announces that it is coordinating, and will continue to coordinate (with the Soviet union) its policy as regards the Middle East and the solution of the conflict. In the past there were two co-chairmen at Geneva, by agreement between the powers, and it was almost impossible to avoid this at the international forums. For any resolutions at the Security Council could be passed only if the two super-powers agreed to it—otherwise one of them would impose a veto. Therefore the decisions of the U.N. must receive the approval of both powers and two co-chairmen were appointed for Geneva for the same reason. But between this and an American statement (also a Soviet statement, but what is disturbing is the American attitude), between this and the American statement that they have coordinated with, and will continue to coordinate their policy with the Soviet Union, there is a great distance. This is very hard for us, and it was also received with indignation by certain circles in the United States—not only by Jews, but also by certain Americans like Senator Jackson and others, and I want not only to express our attitude in principle on this subject, but also to read here the text of the memorandum we presented to the United States on the subject (unofficial translation from the Hebrew of Mr. Dayan's speech):

Israel protested to the President of the United States about the joint American-Soviet statement and expressed its indignation at this step in an official letter. The official letter stated:

"We categorically reject the statement for several reasons:

"A) The statement does not mention Resolutions 242 and 338 which are the only basis agreed by all parties for a settlement in the Middle East.

"B) The statement distorts the content of Resolution 242, referring only to one of its components, namely, an Israeli withdrawal from territories and almost completely ignores the other components.

"C) It contains a reference to the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, while in resolution 242 there is no mention of the term Palestinians and no reference to legitimate rights.

"D) The statement refers throughout only to a settlement and not to a just and lasting peace as appears in the Resolution 242.

"E) The United States and the Soviet Union cannot co-opt additional parties to the negotiations for peace. This can be done only with the consent of the original parties who took part in the session of the Geneva Conference in 1973. We agreed that in the discussion on Judea and Samaria and the affairs of the Gaza Strip, Palestinian Arabs should be enabled to take part. But the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. cannot decide on their own who will be the participants in the Geneva Conference.

"F) From the statement it appears that a special session of the Geneva Conference will be convened for the purpose of discussing the problems of the Middle East. We made it clear to the United States that the Geneva Conference in which we will agree to take part is only a conference based on the foundations laid down on the eve of its first session. Namely, Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the letter of invitation sent to us by the Secretary General of the United Nations. The statement is in contradiction to the commitments of the United States towards us, as expressed in the memoranda of understanding signed with us and in the exchange of letters between the government of Israel and the

government of the United States. The United States informed us of the content of the joint statement only 48 hours before its publication. The Prime Minister expressed to the U.S. Ambassador on September 30 our unequivocal reaction to the content of the statement, but on the following day, on October 1, 1977, the statement was published."

To sum up this subject, I wish to state:

1. The legal basis for the Geneva Conference is Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. We shall take part only in a conference convened on this basis, as also expressed in the letter of invitation sent to us by the co-chairmen, and there will be changes only if the changes are accepted by us.

2. As pointed out in the joint statement of the President of the United States and myself, the agreement of the parties to the American-Russian statement of 1 October 1977 is not a pre-condition for participation in the Geneva Conference, nor is it a basis for the conduct of the negotiations.

3. In the joint American-Israel statement the United States stresses once again that all the existing understandings and agreements between ourselves and the United States continue to be in force.

As is known, the agreements between the United States and ourselves on the subject of the Geneva Conference were brought to the attention of the U.S. Congress and are binding upon the American administration. Therefore, not only did we receive confirmation from the President of the U.S. and the Secretary of State, but in the joint statement published at the end of my talks in Washington, an express statement was made to this effect.

I only want to mention, in connection with Mr. Peres's remarks, that he somehow or other connected the working paper agreed upon between ourselves and the United States with this statement. There is a complete separation between the two.

I want to emphasize that, not only is there no connection, but the understanding we have reached with the United States is based on the fact that we categorically reject this statement, and the United States has stated that it does not demand that we accept this paper.

Another remark on a minor question, so that we may remove it from the agenda:

In connection with the unified delegation — and I shall return to the working paper on which we agreed, and which, in my opinion, is a good paper — not that we were compelled — in my opinion. It is a good paper for the purpose of this discussion. But I shall explain this later. But in regard to the unified delegation, I want to point out that in previous discussions at Geneva, in May 1974, Israel agreed to negotiate a disengagement agreement with Syria together with negotiations with Egypt, with Syrian officers sitting in the Egyptian delegation. The Alignment did this, and I did not object to it, because the Syrians did not want to appear in their own name at Geneva and sign the disengagement agreement with us. They wanted to appear under the cover of the Egyptian delegation, and none of us rejected this. There were no other states there and we accepted them as a joint delegation, and we were concerned only with the content and not with the principle.

Now I want to say in connection with our agreement. In my opinion, the first condition for the agreement on procedure that has now been achieved, or for any agreement on procedure, is that on no account shall it contain any provisions that could afterwards hamper us in implementing those matters of substance that we want to implement. That is, we must not on any account agree to a procedure that will later prevent our implementing the principles which we want. When the time comes, to incorporate in the peace agreement it-

self, this is the condition, this is the test. The question is whether there is anything in this agreement which is liable to prevent or hinder our achieving what we want to achieve in the peace agreement, if we arrive at it, and there is not, in my opinion, anything like this in these provisions.

But if Mr. Peres seriously — and I'm sure he is not doing it seriously — asks whether Syria will agree to peace with us according to the Likud's programme, which does not include a significant withdrawal, or whether Jordan will agree to peace with us when we don't want to withdraw from Judea and Samaria, I certainly cannot give an answer in the affirmative. Why do I say, Shimon, that you are not talking seriously? Will Syria agree to what you propose? Did Jordan agree to what you propose? Can anyone say that the Alignment's programme, or the D.M.C.'s programme, or the programme of the parties — except Rakah — can anyone say he is sure that the other side will agree to it? Is the intensification of settlement in the Ophira area a basis for agreement with Egypt, or settlements on the Golan Heights...? None of us — either in the Likud or in the government — can say for certain.

All the members of the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee — among them Knesset member Peres — are well aware of the proposals we submitted after Secretary of State Vance's visit to Israel, as a draft — and I have no reason for thinking the Arabs will agree to it — of a peace agreement. We were asked to submit substantive papers and, as regards this issue, which is today the nub of the debate here, we wrote — we informed the U.S. — that the basis we proposed for an agreement on peace between ourselves and Jordan is:

A) In Judea and Samaria equal rights and peaceful co-existence for Jews and Arabs must be assured.

B) No part of this region will be placed under foreign rule or sovereignty.

C) Every settlement must take fully into consideration Israel's security needs.

In this connection, our position is that Israel's security on the Eastern border must be based on the River Jordan.

That is the basis, that is the paper we submitted to the United States in preparation for the Geneva Conference, upon which we want to base the peace agreement between ourselves and Jordan. The document did not state that we wish to apply Israeli sovereignty to Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip. It did state that we refuse, reject (the idea) that that region be subject to foreign rule or foreign sovereignty. It stated that we want equal rights and full coexistence between Jew and Arab in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip. And I say this in order to put to the test whether, in the agreement we achieved, in the working paper on procedure, there is anything liable to be an obstacle should we in fact wish to effect these things and should the Arabs wish to move towards us.

I shall read the working paper in its entirety, for it is better to read it here in full before the House than to read tendentious distortions appearing every day in the press purporting to be parts of it, and in particular following the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee session (of yesterday):

*"Working paper on suggestions for the resumption of the Geneva Peace Conference*

*"1. The Arab parties will be represented by a unified Arab delegation, which will include Palestinian Arabs. After the opening session, the conference will split into working groups.*



2. *The working groups for the negotiation and conclusion of peace treaties will be formed as follows:*

- A. *Egypt-Israel*
- B. *Jordan-Israel*
- C. *Syria-Israel*
- D. *Lebanon-Israel\**

*"3. The West Bank and Gaza issues will be discussed in a working group to consist of Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Arabs.*

*"4. The solution of the problem of the Arab refugees and of the Jewish refugees will be discussed in accordance with terms to be agreed upon.*

*"5. The agreed basis for the negotiations at the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East are U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.*

*"6. All the initial terms of reference of the Geneva Peace Conference remain in force, except as may be agreed by the parties.*

What, then, does this agreement contain? It states that there will be a unified Arab delegation at the opening sessions. No negotiations will take place with the unified delegation on any subject whatsoever, that is what is written in the protocol, and it refers to two aspects: First, as regards the opening, and, secondly, following the opening sessions when the conference will split into working groups which will conduct negotiations for the establishment of peace treaties between the various countries. Any attempt to present the matter differently — and I heard that this was done last night on television — is simply untrue.

For this paper does not exist on its own: It is attached to a protocol to which the President of the United States is also a party. One can split hairs as much as one likes, but what it says and what is agreed upon is that we are not being asked to conduct negotiations with a unified delegation. It says that there will be a unified delegation which will later split into working groups, and it is the working groups which will not only conduct negotiations, but will sign peace treaties between Egypt and Israel, Jordan and Israel, Syria and Israel, and Lebanon and Israel. That is the first point.

The second point concerns the participation of the Palestinians in the Geneva Conference as a whole, and that in two forums: The first forum is the united delegation at the opening of the conference, and the second is the working party that will deal with Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip. Palestinians will take part in the first forum. But not on any account a single one of the men of the PLO, and on this there is complete agreement. In a previous draft proposed to us by the Americans, and which Mr. Peres read out, the PLO is mentioned — whether known, unknown or half-known — but all that is now null and void: The agreement is that not one PLO person will participate. We stated that we assume that the Palestinian representatives will come from among the residents of the administered areas. But let us assume that one of those residents of the areas — not a representative from Lebanon, but one of the Mayors here (from the areas) — gets up and states that he represents the PLO, then he cannot take part, because it would be in opposition to the agreement, and we will not participate in opposition to the agreement. The issue is not just that he cannot be a representative from Lebanon: Even if he is one of the residents of the areas, he is acceptable to us as long as he does not state that he represents the PLO. If he

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*\*All the parties agree that Lebanon may join the conference when it so requests."*

states that he represents the PLO, we will not sit together with him. That is the first point as regards participation of the Palestinians.

I shall now discuss the solution of the problem of the refugees: Clauses (3) and (4) of the working paper are not bilateral. Clause (4), which deals with a solution of the refugee question, states that "The solution of the problem of the Arab refugees and of the Jewish refugees will be discussed in accordance with terms to be agreed upon." We want to discuss solution of the problem of the refugees, which, in our view, should be solved by their resettlement in the countries where they now are. And I do not just say this here in the Knesset: We said this to the President and in all the discussions in the U.S. but in order to discuss their resettlement in Lebanon, in Syria, in Jordan, we must hold discussions with those states, and with the Palestinians themselves. Because the matter is a complex one — as there are countries where they now reside which we do not want to take part in the discussions (200,000 refugees in Kuwait, or in Iraq, or even the matter of reparations to the Israeli refugees from Iraq — and we would not want to introduce all that into the Geneva framework) — therefore we said that the solution of the problem of the Arab refugees and the Jewish refugees would be discussed in accordance with rules which have to be agreed upon separately, as a complex question. It is possible that this question will have to be discussed in accordance with rules which have to be agreed upon separately, as a complex question. It is possible that this question will have to be discussed as a whole outside the framework of Geneva, but to say that the Arab-Israeli conflict can be resolved without even touching upon the refugee question would not be correct.

As to the issue which appears in clause (3), "The West Bank and Gaza issues will be discussed in a working group to consist of Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian Arabs." I should like to give my opinion as to why I think that this clause, even as set down here — for the government would have liked a different formulation, without altering its content — is acceptable.

Members of the Knesset, fundamentally the question is a simple one: Do we, in 1977 or 1978, want to talk about any kind of settlement in the framework of a peace agreement as regard to Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip without also talking to the Arabs who live there? I don't. I confess, I want to talk to them too. There are a million and a quarter people there. I do not want to present ourselves, the State of Israel, the People of Israel, as not being ready to sit and talk with representatives of 400,000 Arabs in the Gaza Strip, who are ready to talk with us about peace.

We also said that if the Arabs decide to make a proposal, which was previously made by the Alignment, for the division of the West Bank, we shall sit and discuss it with them. For ten years they would not agree to it, but let us assume that they come forward now and propose it — if they propose it, we shall discuss it. But whether it is the Alignment proposal, the Allon Plan, or a territorial compromise, or whether it is this proposal for living together, do you, Mr. Shimon Peres, believe that in the framework of a peace settlement, a plan like the Allon Plan can be discussed without the participation of Palestinian Arabs? And why? But I want to say more than that — what are the two alternatives that I do not accept which could be different from this. That the Palestinian Arabs should be part of a Jordanian delegation we wanted, and we still want it, but Jordan does not agree. So Jordan believes, for some reason, that it is a sovereign state like any other and we cannot force it. We proposed it and we got a negative reply, so then we face two alternatives: Either they participate in some other form, or, if they don't agree, there will not be a single Palestinian.

What we agreed, and this is stated in the working paper, is that we shall not conduct any negotiations on a peace treaty with this delegation which includes representatives of Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs. And therefore not only does this not come in continuation of the same numbering, but there is a different content. On the subject to the West Bank and Gaza it does not say that there will be a signature of peace treaties, as was said in connection with the negotiations Egypt-Israel, Israel-Syria and so forth. But the subject of the West Bank and Gaza will be discussed in a working group that will include Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Arabs. Egypt participates here because it is the country that, in the past, occupied the Gaza Strip. There is no question here of a peace treaty: What is said here is that we will discuss the issue of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip — not a peace treaty and not the establishment of a state.

I do not believe that, when we establish patterns of procedure, before we agree on content, it is possible or necessary to fix any other pattern of procedure beyond this. What must be done definitely, so that there should be no mistake about it, is that we do not intend to discuss the establishment of a Palestinian State in any form whatsoever. This was not only stated to the President of the United States, but in this paper, which was agreed with the United States, this subject was separated from those issues that are discussed in connection with peace treaties between the states — with the agreement of the Americans, not only in keeping with our own wishful thinking. This has been changed, and this version does not include negotiations, but “will discuss the issues” — and it is not connected with this other group. But to discuss the issues mentioned there — that we shall do.

We must assure ourselves of three main things, and all three are assured in this agreement. First. That our position is that we will not return to the former borders, and therefore Resolution 242 — on the basis of not only our interpretation, but also the American interpretation that Resolution 242 does not call on Israel to return to the former borders — is the sole basis for negotiations at Geneva.

Secondly. That we do not agree, in any manner whatsoever, to the establishment of a Palestinian State — independent or partial or annexed, in the West Bank or in the Gaza Strip. Therefore we agreed to this procedure when it was separated from the other sections, which speak of discussions on relations between one country and another, and we did not agree that independent status be given in any way whatsoever to the Palestinian delegation, nor is there reference anywhere to such status for the Palestinian delegation.

Thirdly. That under no circumstances will we accept any working paper which implies even the slightest possibility that we will have to sit down for discussions with the P.L.O. nor is that contained in the working paper in any form whatsoever.

Therefore, as a working paper, this document, is, I believe, reasonable and good.

Finally, I want to say: Gentlemen, we are not talking about a working paper which has only to serve us. If we, if all of us seriously want to sit down with the Arabs and negotiate, and we sit with the Americans and discuss with them what is the procedure that can serve both sides without this preventing us from standing by our principles — anyone who really wants to try to get a peace settlement with the Arabs — without any certainty that we shall get a peace settlement at the end of the road, without any certainty that we can cover the same road with all the Arab states — but so that we can begin and make the attempt, then we must be prepared to lay down such procedures that both sides will be able to accept them as a framework for the examination of possibilities for peace negotiations.

Since the (Defence and Foreign Affairs) Committee dealt with this matter only yesterday, I propose that this subject be removed from the agenda.

**57. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel radio, 15 October 1977.**

*Shortly after his return to Israel, newspaper reports from Washington stated that the Carter-Dayan meetings were very difficult and that Dayan used the word "brutal" to describe them. There were also reports that President Carter accused Israel of obstructing peace even more than Syria does. These issues and the present stage of the peacemaking process were at the heart of the following radio interview. Text follows:*

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister. Was the talk with the President of the U.S.A. really brutal?

**A.** I don't know whether the word 'brutal' is the correct term. There were in it parts which for me as Foreign Minister of the State of Israel were hard or very hard. Particularly when the President accused Israel of delaying or preventing progress towards peace more than was the case with the Arab states. More even than Syria. And I know Syria's position. But no attempt was made in this talk to dictate to us on any issue which finds expression in the working paper.

When I said at the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee that the talks which lasted for hours contained hard parts, I also used the expression 'brutal'. I never once connected it with a demand on us to agree to something in the work procedure in what was called 'the working paper'. There was no connection between what was written in the working paper and the hard parts of the talk.

**Q.** The style was tougher than usual?

**A.** Be frank. The style was not tougher. But if it's said that Israel prevents peace more than does Syria — when the U.S. President says it — then the toughness is in the substance, not the style.

**Q.** Mr Dayan, from your speech in the Knesset it was possible to understand that Israel has accepted the working document as part of an understanding reached with the U.S. The P.L.O. would not participate in Geneva and that the establishment of a Palestinian State would not be discussed there. The State Department spokesman, in a statement published this (Friday) evening, said there was no such agreement. Is there some kind of misunderstanding here?

**A.** No. There is a clear understanding. In the working agreement which I read to the Knesset there is no item about P.L.O. participation. The P.L.O. is not mentioned there.

**Q.** Did you speak there about additional protocols or about an understanding concerning another agreement?

**A.** I said exactly that Israel had said that under no account would we sit with the P.L.O. whether it was people participating on behalf of the P.L.O. or whether it was West Bank representatives who declared that they represented the P.L.O. We said that we would not sit down with them. I did not say that the U.S. had signed anything to this effect. However, the fact is that in its original formulation in the first draft, not that which was signed but the previous one, there was a clause which stated that some low level P.L.O. men would participate in the joint delegation. This clause has been removed, and in the paper which has been agreed on by the U.S.A. and us no mention of the P.L.O. is made in any form.

**Q.** The State Department spokesman said that the question of Palestinian representation at Geneva was among those that had to be decided by the participants of the conference. That leaves the issue completely open.

A. It could be that it is wide open. I also said that they would go with this format to the Arabs. This is not the final format. It was formulated by the Americans and us. In this draft the P.L.O. is not mentioned. It mentions participants, Palestinian Arabs, but not the P.L.O.

Q. Do you consider that there is a realistic possibility of reaching a decision on the Palestinian issue without the P.L.O.'s participation in some form or other?

A. One hundred percent — or we will not go to Geneva. There will be no Geneva without us. I do not assume it: I am sure that the Americans and the Arabs know that we will not sit down with the P.L.O. They can decide one of two things: Either they decide to give up the idea of P.L.O. participation or there will be no Geneva.

Q. What happens if they put us in a position where we go to Geneva and someone gets up and says that he represents the P.L.O. Will the Israel delegation get up and leave the room?

A. Exactly so. As a rule it is not a matter of surprises. We are not playing hide and seek and the proof is that there are papers and protocols and delegations, etc. I don't think it is a matter of someone suddenly going out of the room taking off his hat and saying: 'Aha, I've caught you' — that's not serious. But if something like that should occur, we will simply get up and go home. I want to add something more. I heard Mrs. Meir speaking about a trap. Can they impose something on us? We are going under the clear and definite condition that we will not talk about certain issues. We will not sit down with certain bodies. We will not discuss the question of a Palestinian State and we will not sit down with the P.L.O.

Q. Perhaps it is a trap. Because under these conditions maybe the convening of the Geneva Conference is unrealistic?

A. If we do not arrive at conditions acceptable to us and the Arabs, there will be no Geneva Conference. One cannot go to Geneva without mutual agreement. So there are two sides, and let's say the Arabs announce they are not going to Geneva unless a delegation of the P.L.O. attends. And we have announced — and there is no doubt in my mind that we will not withdraw from our position — that we will not sit down with the P.L.O. — then if the Arabs do not give in there will be no Geneva.

Q. So what will there be?

A. There won't be anything. Geneva is a continuation. What there should be now is a renewal of the Geneva talks — this is not something new. Geneva is based on Resolution 242 and 242 makes no mention not only of the P.L.O. but not even of Palestinian representation. So if one wants to set up a new conference or a conference on a new basis, one must propose this. And this the Americans have not proposed, nor are the Arabs proposing it, nor is it correct to say (Mrs. Meir alluded to it) that the agreements the Americans signed with us in the past are not longer valid — on the contrary, they stated in the joint communique, on behalf of the President of the United States (and perhaps it can be said that he does not know what he is doing and others here in Israel know better) but he said that all the agreements still exist and are still valid. And so we are going to Geneva on the basis of 242 and in 242 there is no P.L.O. — the Americans have confirmed this — it does not include the P.L.O. unless we agree thereto and we do not agree thereto.

Q. Your critics say that in the U.S. Israel conceded its positions on the issue of the unified Arab delegation and on the introduction of the Palestinians as a separate factor in the Geneva Conference without receiving anything in return. Whereas in the past, when Israel was required to yield and did, it received something in return for its concessions.

**A.** I don't know what we have conceded. The Prime Minister agreed to the joint delegation back in his first talk with Carter, i.e. that at the opening session there could be a joint Arab delegation, but that we would not conduct any negotiations with it. This was stated in the working paper between us and the Americans. And there are absolutely no grounds to what is being said (and I find hints to this effect in what Mrs. Meir said as well) to the effect that Israel has undertaken or agreed to conduct negotiations with a joint Arab delegation. They can sit down and consult among themselves, and in the previous session of the Geneva Conference as well the Syrians sat within the Egyptian delegation — they were the only two states that participated and they sat together but this time we will not conduct negotiations with a joint Arab delegation. And it is stated in the working paper that the negotiations will be conducted separately. I do not see that there is any concession on this. As far as the Palestinians are concerned we proposed that they be part of the Jordanian delegation. The Jordanian delegation, so the Americans told us — does not agree to this on any account and the question that confronted us was whether on that account we should reject outright the participation of the Palestinians in the discussions over Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, or not reject it but define the topic as one that is to be resolved between (sovereign) states — we are not going to sign a peace treaty there but merely to discuss things. In my opinion we should do so. This may be the opinion of a minority of one, but even if others do not propose it I myself would. I would not propose that we seriously sit down and talk about a joint mode of life or the country's partition — it could be the Allon Plan or Mrs. Meir's plan or anything else, but I would not propose that we decide on what will happen in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the million and a quarter inhabitants there, without their taking part in that discussion.

**Q.** Your critics say that Israel is thereby in effect recognizing that the Palestinians are a party to the conflict almost like states, which is tantamount to recognition of their political status.

**A.** That is not correct, because what we defined on that subject is different from the subjects which were discussed with the other states. With the other states there will be negotiations and the signing of a peace treaty, and here the discussion will be on the (complex of) topics concerning the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In this matter they will participate — and in my opinion they should participate — not in the creation of an independent state — and I say this very clearly — not in the creation of an independent state, but in the discussion of matters connected with Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

**Q.** Mr. Dayan. You said during the debate in the Knesset that no political platform of any of the parties is acceptable today to the Arabs as the basis for a peace settlement and that the Arabs have in effect rejected all the peace plans that Israel tried to put forth. The Alignment therefore decided at the time to forgo an overall settlement as a tactical aim and chose instead the course of partial settlements. Now, the Government in which you serve rejects partial agreements and speaks of a contractual peace and an overall settlement. Is there some sort of a contradiction here between the assumption that the Arabs are not prepared to accept Israel's concept of an overall settlement and the posing of an overall settlement as a tactical political move?

**A.** First of all, the Government in which I serve does not say all or nothing, but we do say that we want to arrive at a full contractual peace with all that this implies, and when Mr. Rabin returned from his visit to Carter full of excitement it was precisely on this subject. Namely that at long last the President of the United States in defining the nature of peace, had spoken of diplomatic and commercial relations and so on. Is this something we

should reject? It may be that in the course of negotiations we will not arrive at this, but is it serious, or Zionist, or in Israel's best interests that when the U.S. President says that peace must be full, including diplomatic relations and cultural ties etc. etc., for us to come and say we want anything less? I, at any rate, don't recommend it. What do we say? We say, let us arrive at a full peace agreement, if possible with all the states.

But we are not saying that if one state, or the majority of them, do not want this then we will not make a separate peace with one of them, nor have we said that if we do not succeed in arriving at a full peace agreement then we will not have achieved anything. At this stage we are saying what the objective should be, and we would be well advised not to present anything less than what the U.S. President says when he speaks of the nature of peace being that of a full peace with full normalization.

**Q.** Members of the Likud faction said this week that the working paper is the outer limit of the concessions to which Israel can agree, which means in effect that the Arabs must accept the document as it stands?

**A.** I do not know if they have to accept it as it stands. If they propose changes we will have to consider what these are, maybe they will be changes that are acceptable to us, i.e. not changes of withdrawal or advances but a change in substance. But if they propose any change that we do not want to accept, we will not accept it. The entire approach which speaks of a trap and of what will be at Geneva is to my mind totally invalid. If we say in advance that in some situation or other they demand something of us or the Arabs propose different formulations for the working paper, or if we come to Geneva and sitting opposite us are the great — Russians and the Americans and all the Arab states and they demand something — how will we dare say no? He who says that, should not embark on negotiations in the first place. One can always say no.

If we will not be in a position where we can refuse — then it is not possible to enter any negotiations even today, as it were. They can (dictate to) us. What will happen if the UN Security Council decides to impose sanctions on us? If they throw us out of the UN? All these questions are not hypothetical ones, but real possibilities, and the question is whether Israel can and believes that it can at any stage, beginning with changes in the working paper to be proposed by the Arabs and ending with Geneva itself — refuse to accept what others propose. In my opinion the answer is one hundred percent yes. Certainly they will come up with proposals that we will refuse to accept, and what we don't want to accept we won't accept.

## **58. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan in Newsweek, 17 October 1977.**

*The main problem discussed by the Foreign Minister were Israel-American relations after the publication of the U.S.-Israel working paper of 5 October. Mr. Dayan did not consider that the situation has reached crisis dimensions, but both countries will have to learn to live together even while disagreeing on many issues. Text:*

**Newsweek:** There has been a great deal of friction between the U.S. and Israel in the past few days. Was it really the Soviet-American statement on the Middle East that caused all this fuss? Or was your government already concerned that the Carter Administration was drifting toward the Arab point of view?

**Dayan:** I would hesitate to define it as a direction, something ongoing. I don't know. But you are correct in saying that it was not just the American-Russian paper. [It was also the proposal for] establishment of a Palestinian state. That, in some form, is the idea adopted by and expressed by the President in the way of a homeland or entity for the Palestinians... We think that is the wrong thing to do. [So is] the attitude of the President about going back to the '67 lines with minor modifications.

**Q.** Given these areas of disagreement, is a showdown between the U.S. and Israel inevitable?

**A.** The question is: can we go along together, maintaining our differences of opinion but not really developing them into a crisis? Or at a certain point, will the American Administration... insist on something which will be unacceptable for Israel? This is not the situation now. But the question is about balance — whether we can live together with some problems that we do not agree about, and still go on with the main close relationship.

**Q.** Does Prime Minister Begin appreciate the need to maintain this balance?

**A.** He would try whatever he can [to preserve] this balance and if possible to get closer to the U.S. But that would be [true] up to a point — not only for him, but for any Israeli Government. For instance, if the U.S. insists on a Palestinian state, I think that any Israeli Government would reject it. And if we have to make the choice tomorrow of what to do — have a breach with the U.S. ... or accept a Palestinian state — we would rather have these problems with the U.S. than agree to a Palestinian state, which we seriously think would eventually bring the destruction of Israel.

**Q.** But what about Israel's refusal to even talk to the PLO at Geneva? Isn't that what peace conferences are for — to talk to your enemies?

**A.** Of course, if you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies. But the question is whom do we want to make peace with — not just who are our enemies. Now, we want to make peace with all our neighbours — Egypt and Syria and Jordan. And when we say Jordan, that includes Palestinian Arabs who are living on the West Bank... and in the Gaza Strip, with whom we have to live together... But the PLO organization, which is head-quartered in Beirut, is a very specific organization — terrorists — and in their Covenant, it's clearly put that their aim and target is to destroy Israel. While we want to make peace with our neighbors, we do not think that a new Palestinian state... would be the right solution.

**Q.** But what do you propose to do about the Palestinian refugees?

**A.** They must be settled, no question about that, and [provided with] a normal way of life like any other people. It's a pity that this wasn't done during the 30 years that they have been living in camps. But even if there was a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, that would not solve the problem. It could not accommodate the refugees. So the answer for the refugees is that they should be settled, most of them, in the countries where they are... We think [the Palestinian refugees] should be settled — but not on the basis of a Palestinian state on the West Bank that Yasir Arafat would come to with... some of his forces. That would be just his base for an attack against Israel.

**Q.** How will you settle this without talking to the PLO?

**A.** I think this should be dealt with by an international body. We have to do our share, and probably pay compensation [to the refugees]. But we don't want [the PLO] to come over and establish a state near us. We don't have to talk to them. We don't have to make peace with them.

**Q.** Some people think Israel really does not want to go to Geneva. Does it?



A. It would be bad, but we have to try. And I'm not really sure that in such a case the situation will be the same with all the Arab countries. Maybe we will be completely stuck, for instance, with Syria, but we will be able to make some progress with Jordan or with Egypt. The rate of progress would not necessarily be the same with all Arab countries.

Q. How do you rate the chances of another Middle East War?

A. I think that as long as diplomatic negotiations take place, the chances for war are little. But if we should get stuck, then the chances for war are much bigger.

**59. Statement by Assistant Secretary of State Atherton on Israeli settlements, 19 October 1977.**

*Testifying before the United States House of Representatives International Relations Subcommittees on International Organizations and on Europe and the Middle East, Mr. Atherton reiterated previous American position regarding the Israeli settlements in the territories. He called them an obstacle to peace because their establishment could be perceived as prejudging the outcome of negotiations. He also said that new settlements are inconsistent with international law. Text:*

I am here to respond to your request for the State Department's views on the subject of Israel's settlements in territories occupied in the 1967 war. With your request, you forwarded a number of questions dealing with the legal, political and factual aspects of this subject. In this statement, I will review briefly the legal and political considerations that form the basis of our policy and touch on those questions relating to the relationship of the settlements to the future status of the occupied territories. Following my statement, I am at the sub-committee's disposal to answer today, or subsequently in writing for the record, your questions on these and other aspects of this subject.

**The U.S. position**

The U.S. position on Israeli settlements in the occupied territories has been consistent since this subject first became an issue in 1968.

There are two elements to our position:

First, we have viewed those settlements as an obstacle to peace because their establishment could be perceived as prejudging the outcome of negotiations dealing with the territorial aspects of final peace treaties.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967 establishes the principles that peace must be based on withdrawal by Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict and the termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force. In brief, Resolution 242 envisages Israeli relinquishment of occupied territories in return for Arab agreement to recognize Israel's right to exist and to live in peace with it.

The Arabs perceive Israel's settlements in the occupied territories as indicating that Israel intends to retain permanent control in the areas where the settlements are located

and therefore as prejudging agreement in the negotiations on the location of the final secure and recognized boundaries called for in Resolution 242. The Israeli government has taken the position that all issues are negotiable and that the settlements will not be an obstacle to negotiations and peace. In our view, however, once settlements are established, they inevitably create psychological and political conditions which will make it more difficult to negotiate the final disposition of areas where they are located. This is especially troublesome at a time when one of the main problems in launching peace negotiations is to persuade each side that the other intends to negotiate a settlement within the framework of Resolution 242. Thus, the settlements complicate the work of beginning the negotiations because they raise questions in Arab minds whether the negotiations, once begun, have a reasonable chance of succeeding.

In this respect, they are analogous to statements from some Arab quarters which raise questions in Israeli minds whether the Arabs are really prepared to make genuine peace.

Second, we see the Israeli settlements as inconsistent with international law.

The fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war, which contains many of the internationally recognized rules under which military occupation should be conducted, states in article 49 the following: "The occupying power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own population into the territory it occupies."

Both Israel and its Arab neighbors are signatories of the convention, although Israel maintains that it does not apply to any of the territories it has occupied since 1967, and that, in any case, it does not prohibit the establishment of settlements in occupied territory. We do not agree with this view of the convention. In addition, we believe that under international law generally a belligerent occupant is not the sovereign power and does not have the right to treat occupied territory as its own or to make changes in the territory except those necessitated by the immediate needs of the occupation. In general, an occupant may only use the resources of the territory including public lands to meet the expenses of administering the territory and the military needs of the army of occupation and for the direct benefit of the indigenous inhabitants.

### **The settlements and the future of the territories —**

You have asked me to comment on the relationship between the settlements in occupied territories and the right to self-determination of the people of those territories.

To begin with, it is essential to understand an important difference between the Sinai and the Golan Heights, on the one hand, and the West Bank and Gaza, on the other.

— Territory in the Sinai and the Golan from which Israel withdraws as a result of a negotiated agreement will clearly revert respectively to Egypt and Syria, whose sovereignty is not disputed. The issue of self-determination is therefore not germane in these two cases.

— In the West Bank and Gaza, however, the situation is different. Both of these territories were part of the British Mandate of Palestine. While the legitimate existence of a sovereign Israel in part of Palestine is recognized, the question of sovereignty in the part of Palestine remaining outside of Israel under the 1949 Armistice Agreements has not been finally resolved. Jordan in May 1950 declared that its annexation of the West Bank was without prejudice to the final settlement of the Palestine issue, and Egypt did not make any sovereign claim to the Gaza Strip during the time it was the administering authority there. Israel similarly notes the undefined nature of sovereignty in the West Bank and Gaza.

The relationship between the settlements and the principle of self-determination cannot

be discussed in isolation, because the settlements are but a single factor involved in negotiating peace treaties that will provide among other things for the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the view of the United States, the important thing concerning the future disposition of the West Bank and Gaza is that the arrangement be acceptable to the parties concerned. There is no clear consensus with respect to the question of whether, and if so how, self-determination might be expressed, or to the timing of such an expression. Whether such a consensus can be achieved in the negotiating process that lies ahead remains to be seen. This question, however, together with all the other complex issues of achieving peace in the Middle East Peace Conference so that the negotiating process can be resumed as soon as possible. We are now engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts to that end.

#### **60. Security Council Resolution 416 (1977) extending UNEF mandate, 21 October 1977.**

*While various diplomatic moves were being explored, the United Nations Security Council, adopted with hardly any debate, with China and Libya not participating, a resolution extending by a year the mandate of the United Nations Emergency Force stationed along the lines created by the Israel-Egypt Interim Agreement of 1975, for another year. The vote was 13 to nil. Text:*

##### **The Security Council,**

**Recalling** its resolutions 338 (1973), 340 (1973), 341 (1973), 346 (1974), 362 (1974), 368 (1975), 371 (1975), 378 (1975) and 396 (1976),

**Having considered** the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Emergency Force (S/12416),

**Having noted** the developments in the situation in the Middle East (S/12417),

**Recalling** the Secretary-General's view that any relaxation of the search for a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem could be dangerous and his hope that urgent efforts will be undertaken by all concerned to tackle the Middle East problem in all its aspects, with a view both to maintaining quiet in the region and to arriving at the comprehensive settlement called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973),

**Noting** that the Secretary-General recommends the extension of the mandate for one year,

##### **1. Decides**

(a) To call upon all the parties concerned to implement immediately Security Council resolution 338 (1973);

(b) To renew the mandate of the United Nations Emergency Force for a period of one year, that is, until 24 October 1978;

(c) To request the Secretary-General to submit at the end of this period a report on the developments in the situation and the steps taken to implement Security Council resolution 338 (1973);

**Expresses its confidence** that the Force will be maintained with maximum efficiency and economy.

**61. General Assembly Resolution 32/5 on Israeli settlements in the territories, 28 October 1977.**

*The annual session of the United Nations General Assembly began to pass its annual anti-Israel resolutions by late October. The first of a number of resolutions was the one dealing with Israeli settlements in the territories. A majority of 131 in favour, 1 against (Israel) and 7 abstentions, called on Israel to desist from taking any action designed to change the legal status, geographical nature or demographic composition of the territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem. The Assembly did not make threats and asked the Secretary General to contact Israel and submit a report to the Assembly and the Security Council by the end of the year. Text:*

**The General Assembly,**

**Stressing** the urgent need to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East,

**Expressing** grave anxiety and concern over the present serious situation in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the continued Israeli occupation and the measures and actions taken by the Government of Israel, as the occupying Power, and designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of those territories,

**Considering** that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, is applicable to all the Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967,

1. **Determines** that all such measures and actions taken by Israel in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction of efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East;

2. **Strongly deplores** the persistence of Israel in carrying out such measures, in particular the establishment of settlements in the occupied Arab territories;

3. **Calls upon** Israel to comply strictly with its international obligations in accordance with the principles of international law and the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;

4. **Calls once more upon** the Government of Israel, as the occupying Power, to desist forthwith from taking any action which would result in changing the legal status, geographical nature or demographic composition of the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;

5. **Urges** all States parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War to ensure respect for and compliance with its provisions in all the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem;

6. **Requests** the Secretary-General:

(a) To undertake urgent contacts with the Government of Israel to ensure the prompt implementation of the present resolution;

(b) To submit a report to the General Assembly and the Security Council, not later than 31 December 1977, on the results of his contacts;

7. **Requests** the Security Council to review the situation in the light of the present resolution and of the report of the Secretary-General.

## 62. Address by President Carter to World Jewish Congress, 2 November 1977.

*A restatement of the American policy regarding the Middle East, was the main theme of President Carter's address to the World Jewish Congress meeting in Washington. At this point, the President was still convinced that the resumption of the Geneva Conference was essential for the peacemaking process. The President noted that while Israel accepted the principle of a united Arab delegation in Geneva, the Arabs have accepted Israel's status as a nation and were willing to negotiate with Israel. Excerpts follow:*

We are addressing other global problems which threaten the well-being and security of people everywhere. These include nuclear proliferation, transfer of conventional arms, and the questions of energy, food and environment which face all nations of the world.

We are also seeking solutions to regional conflicts that can do incalculable damage if not resolved. Our efforts toward a new treaty with Panama are one example; bringing about peaceful change in Southern Africa is another. But none is more important than finding peace in the Middle East.

Sixty years ago today, November 2, 1917, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, informed Lord Rothschild of his government's support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish People in Palestine. At that time, the idea seemed visionary and few dared to believe that it could be translated into reality. But today, Israel is a vital force, an independent and democratic Jewish State, whose national existence is accepted and whose security is stronger than ever before. We are proud to be Israel's firm friend and closest partner — and we shall stand by Israel always...

Despite its great accomplishments, however, Israel has yet to realize the cherished goal of living in peace with its neighbors. Some would say that peace cannot be achieved because of the accumulated mistrust and the deep emotions dividing Israelis and Arabs. Some would say that we must realistically resign ourselves to the prospect of unending struggle and conflict in the Middle East.

With such an attitude of resignation, Israel would never have been created, and with such an attitude peace would not be achieved. What is needed is both vision and realism, so that strong leadership can transform the hostility of the past into a peaceful and constructive future. This was the vision of the Zionist movement in the first generation after the Balfour declaration; it can be the achievement of Israel in its second generation as an independent state.

Since becoming president, I have spent much of my time in trying to promote a peace settlement between Israel and her Arab neighbors. All Americans know that peace in the Middle East is of vital concern for our own country. We cannot merely be the idle bystanders. Our friendship and our interests require that we continue to devote ourselves to the cause of peace in this most dangerous region of the world.

Earlier this year, I outlined the elements of a comprehensive peace, not in order to impose our views on the parties, but rather as a way of defining some of the elements of an overall settlement which would have to be achieved through detailed negotiations.

I continue to believe that the three key issues are: First, the obligations of peace, including the full normalization of political, economic and cultural relations; Second, the establishment of effective security measures, coupled to Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and agreement on final, recognized and secure borders; And, third, a resolution of the Palestinian question. Those questions are interrelated in complex ways and for peace

to be achieved, all will have to be resolved.

Recently, our diplomatic efforts have focused on establishing a framework for negotiations so that the parties themselves will become engaged in the resolution of the many substantive issues that have divided them for so long. We can offer our good offices as mediators, we can make suggestions, but we cannot do the negotiating.

For serious peace talks to begin, a reconvening of the Geneva Conference has become essential. All the parties have accepted the idea of comprehensive negotiations at Geneva, and agreement has been reached on several important procedural arrangements.

Israel has accepted for Geneva the idea of a unified Arab delegation which will include Palestinians, and has agreed to discuss the future of the West Bank and Gaza with Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Arabs. This can provide the means for the Palestinian voice to be heard in the shaping of a Middle East peace, and this represents a positive and constructive step. Israel has also repeated its willingness to negotiate without preconditions, and has stressed that all issues are negotiable, an attitude that others must accept if peace talks are to succeed.

For their part, the Arab states involved have accepted Israel's status as a nation. They are increasingly willing to work toward peace treaties, and to form individual working groups to negotiate settlement of border and other disputes. No longer do they refuse to sit down at the negotiating table with Israel, nor do they dispute Israel's right to live within secure and recognized borders. That must be taken as a means of how far we have come from the intransigent positions of the past.

The procedural agreements hammered out in 1973 at the first Geneva Conference will be a good basis for the reconvened conference.

Even a year ago the notion of Israelis and Arabs engaging in face-to-face negotiations about real peace, a peace embodied in binding treaties, seemed illusory. Yet today such negotiations are within reach — and I am proud of the progress that has been achieved to make this dream possible.

But to improve the atmosphere for serious negotiations, mutual suspicions must be further reduced. One source of Arab concern about Israeli intentions has been in the establishment of civilian settlements in territories currently under occupation, which we consider to be in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention.

On the Arab side, much still needs to be done to remove the suspicions that exist in Israel about Arab intentions. It was not so long ago, after all, that Arab demands were often expressed in extreme and sometimes violent ways. Israel's existence was constantly called into question. The continuing refusal of the Palestine Liberation Organization to accept the U.N. Resolution 242 and Israel's right to exist, along with the resort to violence and terror by some groups, provides Israelis with tangible evidence that their worst fears may in fact be justified.

Differences naturally persist, not only between Arabs and Israelis, but among the Arab parties themselves. We are actively engaged in an effort to narrow these differences so that Geneva can be reconvened, and we have called on the other co-chairman of the Geneva Conference, the Soviet Union, to use its influence constructively.

We will continue to encourage a constructive solution to the Palestinian question in a framework which does not threaten the interests of any of the concerned parties, yet respects the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. The nations involved must negotiate the settlement, but we ourselves do not prefer an independent Palestinian State on the West Bank.

Negotiations will no doubt be prolonged and often difficult. But we are in this to stay. I

will personally be prepared to use the influence of the United States to help the negotiations succeed. We will not impose our will on any party, but we will constantly encourage and try to assist the process of conciliation.

Our relations with Israel will remain strong. Since 1973, we have provided 10 billion dollars in military and economic aid to Israel, of which more than two-thirds was in the form of direct grants or concessional loans. The magnitude of this assistance is without parallel in history. It has greatly enhanced Israel's economic health and her military strength. Our aid will continue.

As difficult as peace through negotiations will be in the Middle East, the alternative of stalemate and conflicts is infinitely worse the cost of another war would be staggering, in both human and economic terms. Peace, by contrast, offers great hope to the peoples of the Middle East who have already contributed so much to civilization. Peace — which must include a permanent and secure Jewish State of Israel — has a compelling logic for the Middle East. It could begin to bring Arabs and Israelis together in creating a prosperous and stable region. The prospect of coexistence and of cooperation could revive the spirits of those who have for so long thought only of violence and the struggle for survival. Peace would lift the enormous burdens of defense, and uplift the people's quality of life.

The idea of peace in the Middle East is no more of a dream than was the idea of a national home for the Jewish people in 1917. But it will require the same dedication that made Israel a reality and has allowed it to grow and prosper.

We may be facing now the best opportunity for a permanent Middle East peace settlement in our lifetime. We must not let it slip away. Well meaning leaders in Israel, in the Arab nations, and indeed throughout the world are making an unprecedented and concerted effort to resolve deep-seated differences in the Middle East. This is not a time for intemperance or partisanship. It is a time for strong and responsible leadership and a willingness to explore carefully and thoughtfully the intentions of others.

It is a time to use the mutual strength and the unique partnership between Israel and the United States — and the influence of you and others who have a deep interest and concern — to guarantee a strong and permanently secure Israel — at peace with her neighbors, and able to contribute her tremendous resources toward the realization of human rights and a better and more peaceful life throughout the world.

### **63. Interview with Secretary of State Vance in U.S. News & World Report, 7 November 1977.**

*The Middle East section of the interview contained an American warning that if Israel and the Arabs fail to get into substantive discussions, there will be a drift toward war. The U.S. still wanted the Geneva Peace Conference before the end of 1977, although Mr. Vance realized that the issues being so difficult, "it might take months or even years to accomplish." Mr. Vance also discussed the possibility of U.S. guarantees to Israel that could include a U.S. defence treaty with Israel. Excerpts follow:*

**Q.** For many years Washington has worked on the assumption that the Russians were bent on exploiting the Arab-Israeli conflict and that they should be kept on the

sidelines. Why have you reversed this policy overnight by issuing a joint declaration with the Soviets on Mideast peace negotiations?

A. The Russians have a role to play in the Middle East. They are one of the two Co-chairmen of the Geneva Conference. It has been our view from the outset that we should seek to work with the Soviets in a constructive way to try to move toward the reconvening of the Geneva Conference and to search for a just and lasting peace. Therefore, we have sought to work with them in a cooperative fashion to achieve these ends. I think we are making some progress, and I think that it will help both of us in terms of bringing about a Geneva Conference and also in making progress once a Geneva Conference is convened.

Q. Aren't the Russians really bent on making mischief in the Middle East rather than ending the conflict there?

A. I don't think that's true. I think that we ought to proceed on the assumption that they are willing to work in a cooperative fashion unless we find the contrary to be true.

Q. What role would you expect the Soviets to play?

A. I would hope that the Soviets would encourage, as we have encouraged, all of the parties to take a more flexible and cooperative attitude to move forward towards serious negotiations.

Q. Do you feel that if the Russians were not brought into an active role they would try to wreck a settlement eventually?

A. I wouldn't use the word "wreck." I would say that I think they have the capability of playing either a helpful or a spoiling role.

Q. Do you see the Russians involved in international peacekeeping operations in the Middle East and perhaps in Southern African or other areas of conflict?

A. I think it has been the general feeling of most nations that it is a mistake for either of the so-called two great powers, the Soviets or ourselves, to have actual troops involved in peacekeeping operations. That does not mean, however, that we cannot play a constructive role through providing logistic support and other help, such as we have done in many peacekeeping operations in the past.

It also does not preclude either of us from playing the role of a guarantor of a peace that is arrived at. This, of course, would have to be done in accordance with the constitutional processes of our respective countries — namely, by working through the Congress in the case of the United States. Supplying peacekeeping forces is better done by the medium and smaller countries.

Q. You would rule out American troops in the Middle East?

A. Yes. I think that is unlikely and probably unwise.

Q. Why is the administration so determined to get everyone to a new Geneva Conference, even though the differences between the two sides seem irreconcilable?

A. Unless you get the people to the bargaining table, you're never going to get down to the serious issues which have to be dealt with. As I look back over history and my own experience in the Vietnam negotiations in 1968, I've seen too much time spent on procedural issues while lives are threatened or even lost. I, for one, feel very strongly that the important thing is to get the people to the bargaining table so they can sit down and really start negotiating serious issues. When I think back to the Vietnam negotiations, and of the many months that we spent arguing about the shape of a table, about the speaking order, about whether there would be flags or not, when all the time killing was going on, it has left a rather deep scar.



**Q.** Is there a danger that even if you get everybody to go to Geneva that you will have a quick collapse because of the wide differences?

**A.** I want to make it very clear that although we've been talking a lot publicly about procedures, we also have been talking seriously in our conversations with each one of the Foreign Ministers about the substance of a settlement. A great deal of quiet, important work has been going on with each one of the Foreign Ministers, talking about the terms of peace treaties which would be negotiated once we get to Geneva.

I don't want to minimize the difficulty of the issues that are going to have to be negotiated when you get down to hard, substantive bargaining. It's going to be very, very difficult, and it's going to take a lot of time. We can't expect miracles to happen overnight. It might take months or even years to accomplish.

**Q.** Do you think a breakdown of a Geneva Conference would lead inevitably to another war?

**A.** If we fail to get into substantive discussions, then the drift will be toward war.

**Q.** How can you hope to persuade Israel to accept PLO participation at Geneva and the establishment of a Palestinian entity when Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan says he will walk out if such terms are pressed?

**A.** We have agreed that there should be a unified Arab delegation, with Palestinians in the delegation. We have not yet been able to reach agreement on who the Palestinians will be. This is something that we're continuing to work on with all the parties. If we can get agreement among the parties as to how to define who the Palestinians will be, then I think we will have made a major step forward. I think this is possible.

**Q.** And on the question of a Palestinian entity?

**A.** When you start discussing the questions of Gaza and the West Bank, obviously that takes you into the Palestinian question and our position is very clear on this. We have said we believe that there should be a Palestinian homeland. We have said, however, that it's our preference that the Palestinian homeland should be affiliated with Jordan.

This is obviously a question that has to be negotiated by the parties. We have said we're not going to impose a solution. We are going to express our views. We will use persuasion to try to bring the parties together, but the final settlements have to be agreed among the parties if they are going to be lasting settlements.

Let me make another point. We have made it very clear to Israel that we stand foursquare behind our commitments to their security and that we will not do anything which would jeopardize their security by trying to exercise pressure through the withholding of military assistance or economic assistance.

**Q.** How far are you willing to go to provide military security for Israel to get them to go the last mile to a peace settlement with the Arabs?

**A.** We have said in the joint statement which we issued with the Soviets that we would be prepared to consider the question of guarantees of any peace agreement provided that it were done in accordance with the constitutional processes of the United States and agreed by the parties.

**Q.** Does that mean a bilateral U.S. defense treaty with Israel?

**A.** It could.

#### **64. Statement by President Sadat to the Egyptian People's Assembly, 9 November 1977.**

*In the course of a long speech to the People's Assembly in Cairo, President Sadat said that he was ready to come to Jerusalem and address the Knesset and to negotiate a Middle East settlement. He added that he did not want to have more soldiers wounded in new confrontations. This speech was to inaugurate the events that would lead to Sadat's visit to Jerusalem ten days later. Text of the relevant part of the speech follows:*

"I state in all seriousness that I am prepared to go to the end of the world — and Israel will be surprised to hear me tell you that I am ready to go to their home, to the Knesset itself, to argue with them, in order to prevent one Egyptian soldier from being wounded. Members of the People's Assembly, we have no time to waste."

#### **65. Broadcast by Prime Minister Begin to the Egyptian People, 11 November 1977.**

*The first official response from Israel to Sadat's offer to come to Jerusalem and address Israel's elected representatives in the Knesset, was given by Prime Minister Begin. In a broadcast to the people of Egypt, in the English language, Mr. Begin said that it would be a "pleasure to welcome and receive your President". Mr. Begin also reiterated his call for no more wars — peace — a real peace forever. Text:*

Citizens of Egypt: This is the first time that I address you directly; but it is not for the first time that I think and speak of you. You are our neighbours and always will be.

For the last 29 years, a tragic, completely unnecessary conflict has continued between your country and ours. Since the time when the Government of King Farouk gave the order to invade our land, Eretz Israel, in order to strangle our newly-restored freedom and independence, four major wars have taken place between you and us. Much blood was shed on both sides. Many families were orphaned and bereaved, in Egypt and Israel.

In retrospect, we know that all those attempts to destroy the Jewish State were in vain, as were all the sacrifices you were called upon to make — in life, in development, in economy, in social advancement — all these superfluous sacrifices were also in vain. And may I tell you, our neighbours, that so it will be in the future.

You should know that we have come back to the Land of our forefathers, that it is we who liberated the country from British rule, and that we have established our independence in our Land for all generations to come.

We wish you well. In fact, there is no reason whatsoever for hostility between our peoples. In ancient times, Egypt and Eretz Israel were allies, real friends and allies, against a common enemy from the north. Indeed, many changes have taken place since those days. But perhaps the intrinsic basis for friendship and mutual help remains unaltered.

We, the Israelis, stretch out our hand to you. It is not, as you know, a weak hand. If attacked, we shall always defend ourselves, as our forefathers, the Maccabees did — and won the day.

But we do not want any clashes with you. Let us say one to another, and let it be a

silent oath by both peoples, of Egypt and Israel: no more wars, no more bloodshed, and no more threats. Let us not only make peace. Let us also start on the road of friendship, of sincere and productive cooperation. We can help each other. We can make the lives of our nations better, easier, happier.

Your President said, two days ago, that he is ready to come to Jerusalem, to our Parliament — the Knesset — in order to prevent one Egyptian soldier from being wounded. It is a good statement. I have already welcomed it, and it will be a pleasure to welcome and receive your President with the traditional hospitality you and we have inherited from our common father, Abraham. And I, for my part, will of course be ready to come to your capital, Cairo, for the same purpose: No more wars — peace — a real peace and forever. It is in the holy Koran, in Surah 5, that our right to this Land was stated and sanctified. May I read it to you, this eternal surah:

*"Recall when Moses said to his people: Oh my people, remember the goodness of Allah towards you when he appointed prophets amongst you... Oh my people, enter the Holy Land which Allah hath written down as yours..."*

It is in this spirit of our common belief in God, in divine providence, in right and in justice, in all the great human values which were handed down to you by the prophet Mohammed and by our prophets — Moses, Yeshayahu, Yirmiyahu, Yehezke'el — it is in this human spirit that I say to you with all my heart: Shalom.

It means *sulh*. And vice-versa: *sulh* means shalom.

#### **66. Reply in the Knesset by Defence Minister Weizman to question on the situation in Southern Lebanon, 13 November 1977.**

*On 6 and 8 November, the northern Israeli town of Nahariya was subjected to Katyusha rocket attacks from Southern Lebanon. Three civilians lost their lives and six other were wounded. On 9 November Israeli jets hit PLO bases in the Tyre area destroying installations and killing a large number of terrorists. The attacks were seen as a PLO effort to forstall any peace efforts in the Middle East, either in the form of a Geneva Conference or direct talks. In reply to questions in the Knesset, Defence Minister Weizman, after revealing that in mid-September Israel played a major role in bringing an end to the fighting in southern Lebanon and the establishment of an effective cease fire, told the House that the cease-fire must be scrupulously observed and that the terrorists must pull back away from the range of the Israeli settlements along the northern border. Text:*

Our policy in Southern Lebanon is based on the following principles:

1. Israel has no interest today, and had none in the past, in attacking, occupying or gaining control over any area whatsoever of Lebanese territory. For many long years our northern border has been exemplary as far as proper neighbourly relations are concerned and it is our wish to re-establish such an atmosphere.

2. Israel has given a great deal of assistance to the villagers of Southern Lebanon. The assistance was given in all spheres — medical, economic and military. We shall not abet

any cease-fire in Southern Lebanon that would serve to camouflage the killing of these villagers, or the elimination of their leaders and commanders. We shall stand by them to ensure their safety and (peaceful) existence.

3. Israel has never agreed to a border which may be crossed only in one direction and across which it is permitted to shoot in one direction, while the I.D.F. is not permitted to strike back. Any Arab state that plays host to terrorists, permitting them freedom of action against us from bases in its territory, will not be able to shelter behind formalistic arguments. Borders can be respected only on a mutual basis. So long as the terrorists act against us from Southern Lebanon we shall take action against them in any manner that the I.D.F. finds effective.

Last week Nahariya was shaken out of its calm by rocket attacks that resulted in the deaths of three of its residents. From this platform I wish to express the condolences of the government of Israel to the bereaved families. I want to assure you that we are adequately prepared to defend the safety of our citizens. Any repetition of such incidents — and I hope that the lessons of the reaction of last week will avert their recurrence — would lead to an immediate sharp and powerful response.

Six weeks ago Israel played a major role in bringing to an end the fighting in Southern Lebanon. The government of Israel anticipated that the governments of Lebanon and Syria would successfully play their part in imposing an effective cease-fire on the various terrorist organizations. Agreement was reached on a cease-fire, during which period talks were to have been held with representatives of the Lebanese government to make the cease-fire in the South permanent and stable.

Our stand on this matter is absolutely clear:

A. The first — and absolute — condition: It is impossible to conduct negotiations unless the cease-fire is strictly observed. Consequently, at a certain stage, when the shooting incidents were resumed at the initiative of the terrorist organizations, we cancelled a scheduled meeting with the Lebanese representatives. We held no further meetings until the cease-fire was reinstated.

B. Right from the start we consented to, and regarded positively, the descent of Lebanese army troops to the south. We had no doubt that, unless there was a force capable of stationing itself between the adversaries, and of supervising the cease-fire and if necessary of imposing it by force — it would be impossible to maintain calm in the region.

C. Israel insisted that the Lebanese army come south only after completion of the withdrawal to the north of the terrorists from their strongholds.

D. Israel insisted that the terrorists pull back far enough to ensure that her settlements are out of range of their weapons.

E. In the framework of Israel's continuing contacts with the Lebanese, through U.S. mediation, we are trying at this time to reach agreement on an apparatus for supervision and control to ensure implementation of the pullback, as agreed.

To sum up: The government of Israel is prepared to work towards promoting a permanent settlement in Southern Lebanon. From this rostrum once again I call upon our neighbours to the North to cooperate with us in doing everything possible for observation of the cease-fire, ousting of the terrorists and restoration of law and order in the south.

Let us work together to transform the 'Good Fence' into the 'quiet border'.

**67. Joint interview Begin-Sadat on C.B.S. television, 14 November 1977.**

*The interview was conducted by Walter Cronkite in New York. This was the first time that such a programme was aired and it dealt with the proposed visit of Sadat to Jerusalem. The Egyptian President insisted that it was his own initiative and that there were no prior conditions to the visit. Mr. Begin announced that he would be making a statement in the Knesset the next day and would be sending an official invitation to Sadat on that day. Following is the AP abbreviated version of the joint interview:*

**Sadat:** I'm just waiting for the proper invitation.

**Cronkite:** You must get something directly from Mr. Begin, not through the press?

**Sadat:** Right. Right.

**Cronkite:** And how would that be transmitted, sir, since you do not have diplomatic relations with Israel?

**Sadat:** Why not through our mutual friend, the Americans...

**Begin:** ...I will, during the week, ask my friend, the American Ambassador to Israel to find out in Cairo from his colleague, the American Ambassador to Egypt, whether he will be prepared to give us his good offices, and transmit a letter from me to President Sadat inviting him, formally and cordially, through the good offices of the United States, to come to Jerusalem.

(Cronkite asked if there were any conditions to Sadat's visiting Israel.)

**Sadat:** The only condition is that I want to discuss the whole situation with the 120 members of the Knesset and put the full picture and details of the situation from our point of view.

**Cronkite:** If you get that formal invitation, how soon are you prepared to go?

**Sadat:** Really, I'm looking forward to fulfil this visit in the, in the earliest time possible.

**Cronkite:** Would that... that would be, say, within a week?

**Sadat:** You can say that, yes.

**Cronkite:** You said that you wished to address the Knesset, the parliament in Israel...

**Sadat:** That's right.

**Cronkite:** Would you also engage in substantive discussions?

**Sadat:** I may exchange our views or so with Begin... yes.

**Cronkite:** What about the opposition from some of your fellow leaders in the Arab world to this visit... they have expressed this to you, I gather?

**Sadat:** I didn't tell anyone of my colleagues and I didn't ask them to agree or not agree upon this. I felt that my responsibility and my responsibility as President of Egypt also, is to try all means to reach peace. And I took this decision for sure, there are those who are against it, but as much as I am convinced that this is the right way and my people back me, I shall be fulfilling the whole thing.

**Cronkite:** Has the PLO leader Yasser Arafat expressed any opinion on this visit to Premier Begin?

**Sadat:** Not at all. Not at all because as I told you, Walter, I, this is my initiative.

**Cronkite:** What is the ultimate that could result from such a meeting... what's the best way you could hope for?

**Sadat:** We are in a crucial moment. There has never been a suitable moment in the Arab world to reach genuine peace like we are now. So I want to put the fact before them

and in the same time we want to discuss what will be the other alternative if we can't achieve peace. It will be horrible. Believe me, horrible.

**Cronkite:** You suggested that perhaps a Palestinian now, a professor in an American university, might be a proper representative and solve this problem of who would represent the Palestinians at Geneva. Now, we... you said that Yasser Arafat had agreed with that...?

**Sadat:** Yes.

**Cronkite:** However, now the information director for the PLO at the Tunis meeting of foreign ministers says the whole idea is absurd.

**Sadat:** You know we are accustomed to this in the Arab world. And I anticipated this. But you see, I'm, as I am telling, you, I'm quite calm.

(Cronkite later asked Begin when he would move this peace initiative from long-distance dialogue to a person-to-person meeting.)

**Begin:** Tomorrow I will make a statement in our parliament in the afternoon and I think that immediately after this statement I will get in touch with Mr. Lewis, my good friend the American Ambassador, and so find out. But I can assure you, Mr. Cronkite, as we really want the visit of President Sadat, we really want to negotiate the peace, to establish permanent peace in the Middle East, I will not hesitate to send such a letter.

**Cronkite:** Are there any pre-conditions... are conditions under which you will be inviting him to...

**Begin:** ... no pre-conditions and I understand that also President Sadat doesn't put forward any pre-conditions. He has got his position, we have our position, let us sit together around the table and talk peace, and everybody will bring his position.

**Cronkite:** He hinted to me this morning that he thought it might be possible that he would be going to Israel if the invitation was forthcoming within a week or so. Do you think that's realistic?

**Begin:** Very good news, well, if President Sadat is ready to come next week, if he tells me that he will come next week, I will have to postpone my trip to Britain because I am supposed to go next Sunday to London at the invitation of Prime Minister Callaghan. But I suppose that Prime Minister Callaghan will also be agreeable rather to postpone that meeting for a week and rather have President Sadat in Jerusalem, because it is hoped to have peace in the Middle East. But if President Sadat would come after my return from Europe I will come back home next Friday after my visit to London and to Geneva and then he may come the other Monday. But anyhow, any time, any day he's prepared to come, I will receive him cordially at the airport, and go together with him to Jerusalem, also present him to the Knesset and let him make his speech to our parliament. I will follow him onto the platform and greet him, receive him. I think it's now up to President Sadat to carry out his, let me say, promise, or bring into fruition his readiness to come to Jerusalem.

#### **68. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin on Sadat's visit, 15 November 1977.**

*Shortly after Sadat made his announcement that he was willing to come to Jerusalem, six urgent motions for the agenda were tabled in the Knesset, all dealing with the need for Israel to invite Sadat. In his statement Mr. Begin informed the House that after the debate,*

*he was going to issue an official invitation to Sadat to come to Jerusalem. He also outlined Israel's negotiating position, no prior conditions and everything is negotiable. Each side can raise any issue it will see fit. The Knesset overwhelmingly adopted a resolution calling on the government to invite President Sadat. Text of Mr. Begin's statement follows:*

Madame Chairwoman, members of the Knesset,

This is a fitting day to hold this debate: Today we are communing with the immortal memory of David Ben-Gurion, who declared our independence and raised the flag of Israel among the nations. He was not only the first Prime Minister of Israel, but the first of the six of them to direct an appeal to the surrounding Arab rulers and tell them: I am ready to meet with you at any time and in any place in order to speak peace with us.

After him this appeal was uttered by the late Prime Minister Sharett and the late Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, and — may they enjoy long life — Prime Minister Golda Meir and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and I too, have uttered such an appeal. But, as I noted, David Ben-Gurion was the first Israel Prime Minister to make such an appeal. Hence, Madame Chairwoman, we proposed — and our suggestion was accepted — that this important debate be held on the day of communion with him.

Madame Chairwoman, I shall begin at the end. This evening, on the conclusion of the debate in the Knesset, and the will of the house having found clear and salient expression in the remarks of the representatives of the factions — both those supporting the government and those serving in the opposition — I shall convey to the Ambassador of the United States, my friend Mr. Lewis, a letter, and I shall request that he transmit it without delay to the President of Egypt, Anwar Sadat. I spoke with Ambassador Lewis this morning, and I requested that he ask his counterpart in Cairo whether we could avail ourselves of their assistance in order to convey such a message, as was explicitly requested yesterday evening by President Sadat. Mr. Lewis's reply was warm and cordial: He promised me to convey any message, any letter, any appeal immediately upon receiving it.

I should like to thank him and his counterpart in Cairo for the assistance they gave us and are ready to give us in getting my letter to President Sadat.

We expect that my message will be transmitted to him this evening, and I can therefore inform the house that we shall make it public tomorrow. It would not be polite to make the letter public before it reaches the addressee. But, even with the special arrangements involved, it is a reasonable assumption that we shall make the letter public tomorrow morning, after President Sadat has received it.

I also wrote a personal message today to the President of the United States, Mr. Carter, in order to inform him of the recent development between Egypt and Israel, and also to thank him for the assistance extended us by the two American Ambassadors in Israel and in Cairo to fulfill President Sadat's request to the effect that 'I expect an official invitation.'

If the Egyptian President accepts my invitation — which, after the dignified debate in the Knesset I may term our invitation — to come to Jerusalem, to visit our country and also to come to the Knesset — in that event, Madame Chairwoman, the House Committee will have to pass another resolution in order to enable the President to speak from this rostrum. The House Committee adopted three resolutions, in 1964, 1966 and 1970, in connection with the appearance of foreign statesmen from this rostrum. The great rule is that only Knesset members speak from this rostrum — as well as Ministers who are not Knesset members — and that is a just and fitting rule. But three times we made exceptions, the agreed decision being that foreign heads of State will be permitted to extend their

greetings from the Knesset rostrum. We can, therefore, base ourselves upon that decision but it is not complete.

It states: 'Their greetings' — and this time, if President Sadat does visit us, it is not just a question of greetings, but a speech in which the President of Egypt will address the Israel House of Representatives. And therefore, if we receive an affirmative reply from Cairo, from President Sadat, I shall so inform the speaker, and I shall ask that an urgent session of the House Committee be convened, and I shall propose that it adopt an additional resolution to the effect that: 'The House Committee resolves that the President of Egypt will be able to deliver an address from the Knesset rostrum.'

President Sadat also requested to meet with all the members of the Knesset, of all parties. We agree to this request, and we shall make all the required arrangements to enable him to meet with all parties without exception — both those supporting the government and those serving in the parliamentary opposition.

With your concurrence, members of the Knesset, I have invited the President of Egypt to visit us, to deliver his address, to meet the members of the house. But I should like to say, following upon the interview I gave the American media yesterday evening, that this invitation does not constitute any attempt to drive a wedge between the Arab states. We have no such intention. I hereby state that we are prepared to conduct negotiations for the achievement of peace in the Middle East and the signature of peace treaties with all our neighbours, with each and every one of them. But I invited the President of Egypt — I think it was only natural. It is the largest of the Arab states. In our conviction there is no basis for the conflict between Egypt and ourselves. The conflict has been tragic, superfluous, prolonged, and this was our appeal. But from this rostrum I beg to invite the President of Syria, Mr. Assad, King Hussein and President Sarkis to come to us and open negotiations on peace treaties.

(In reply to an interjection from Mr. Meir Wilner, M.K.): Although you have interrupted me, I hope that, when President Sadat stands here, you will not interrupt him.

We are prepared to conduct fundamental and serious talks with authoritative representatives of the Arabs of the Land of Israel, with true spokesmen of the Arabs of the Land of Israel in order to lay the foundation, in these talks, for living together, for an attitude of mutual respect, for social and economic progress, for human freedom, for equality of rights, for peace between ourselves and the entire Arab world in Israel and abroad.

I am happy to state that both President Sadat and Israel's spokesman agreed that if this visit takes place it will be held without any prior conditions from any side. President Sadat and I have positions. When we sit down at one table, we shall express them, and we shall speak frankly, as befits representatives of nations that have made great and important contributions to the civilization of mankind, and who know that our peoples hope and pray for peace. But no prior conditions.

But now is the time to explain the meaning of this concept. Each side has positions. If one side announced: "I shall come to Jerusalem", or "I shall come to Geneva", or "I will agree to receive you in Jerusalem", or "meet you in Geneva on condition that you announce in advance that you identify with my position, accept my view" — this would be a prior condition. I am happy that President Sadat did not make such a condition. Nor did I make it. When he comes we shall discuss the question affecting the two peoples and, I believe, we shall speak peace to one another.

I would also request that this meeting, when it takes place, shall not be accompanied by any threats. Even yesterday President Sadat said over American television: "I am ready to



go to the Knesset. I hope we shall get a settlement, because the alternative to a settlement would be terrible, terrible.” I beg to state that we have no alternative to peace. We want peace, true peace, with all our heart and soul, permanent peace that will find expression in peace treaties, and we shall live together. There is no need — and here I address President Sadat directly — to accompany the holding of this meeting with any threats. We have no need for that.

Of course we must keep our eyes open, and so we do, but without threats. We do not threaten Egypt and will not threaten her and we ask the President of Egypt not to threaten us. Let us meet and start this important dialogue between ourselves and the Egyptian President, between ourselves and the Arab people, on the achievement of permanent peace in the region.

Madame Chairwoman. After the debate that has taken place in the Knesset, I thank the members of the Knesset, the parties of the coalition and of the opposition, on the dignified statements they have made today from this rostrum. I can say, on behalf of all the house of Israel, that if President Sadat decides to respond to my invitation and come to Jerusalem, to visit our country, to meet the members of the Knesset, he will be received with respect and cordiality, as befits the head of a neighbouring state with which we wish to live in peace. I propose, Madame Chairwoman, to refer all six motions to the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee.

#### **69. Prime Minister Begin's letter of invitation to President Sadat, 15 November 1977.**

*After assuring himself that if officially invited, President Sadat would come to Jerusalem, Prime Minister Begin asked the U.S. to convey to the Egyptian leader a letter of invitation. On the day the letter was despatched, Sadat declared that his proposed trip to Israel was a “holy mission”. Sadat also announced a trip to Damascus prior to coming to Jerusalem for talks with President Assad on his visit to Israel. Following is the text of Mr. Begin's letter:*

His Excellency  
Mr. Anwar Sadat  
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
Cairo

Jerusalem, November 15, 1977

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the government of Israel I have the honour to extend to you our cordial invitation to come to Jerusalem and to visit our country.

Your Excellency's readiness to undertake such a visit as expressed to the People's Council of Egypt, has been noted here with deep and positive interest, as has been your statement that you would wish to address the members of our parliament, the Knesset, and to meet with me.

If, as I hope, you will accept our invitation, arrangements will be made for you to address the Knesset from its rostrum. You will also, should you so desire, be enabled to meet with our various parliamentary groups, those supporting the government as well as those in opposition.

As to the date of the proposed visit we shall be glad to meet with your convenience. It so happens that I am scheduled at the invitation of Prime Minister Callaghan to leave for London on Sunday, 20 November, on an official visit to Great Britain. Should you advise me, Mr. President, that you would be ready to come to Jerusalem on Monday, 21 November, I would ask Prime Minister Callaghan's indulgence and arrange to postpone my visit to Britain, so as to be able to receive you personally and to initiate together with you talks on the establishment of peace, for which, as we both know, the peoples of the Middle East yearn and pray.

Alternatively, should you decide to come here on Thursday, 24 November, or thereafter, I would be back from London by Wednesday afternoon, and greet you upon your arrival.

May I assure you, Mr. President, that the parliament, the government and the People of Israel, will receive you with respect and cordiality

Yours sincerely,  
Menachem Begin

#### **70. Interview with Chief of Staff Gur in Yediot Aharonot on Egyptian war preparations, 15 November 1977.**

*Four days before the arrival of President Sadat, the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defence Forces, in a newspaper interview, warned against the possibility of an Egyptian attack and called for maximum alert in view of the Egyptian war exercises in recent months and other signs indicating that Egypt was at a peak of war preparations. The interview, given without prior knowledge and approval of the Defence Minister, created some turmoil. Months later, Israeli cabinet members revealed that in mid-October there was fear of an Israel-Egypt war and it was averted by the decisions of both parties to start negotiating. Following is the Israel Government Press Office bulletin of the interview:*

"The Egyptian President should realize that if what he has in mind is another deception like that on the eve of the Yom Kippur war, his intentions are quite clear to us". The Chief-of-Staff, Lieut.-Gen. Mordehai Gur said in an interview with Yediot Aharonot. "We know that the Egyptian army is at the height of preparations for a war on Israel to be launched in 1978 — in spite of President Sadat's declaration that he is prepared to come to Israel."

The Chief-of-Staff added that, like all other Israelis, he would be very glad if the Egyptian President were to come to Jerusalem with the true and sincere aim of concluding a peace treaty. However, he went on, "Reliable information is reaching us pointing to the very opposite intention. The Israeli and international public should be careful not to get carried away with too much enthusiasm or with anticipations that may not be fulfilled, and in the wake of which will come bitter disappointment — or perhaps something even worse."

The Chief-of-Staff then went on to say: "In recent months the Egyptian army has been engaged in intense exercises, reinforcement of its troops and other war preparations. The troops and the other means that Egypt prepared for war on Libya could be transferred now, in no time at all, for use against Israel.

"The Egyptian army — just as was the case on the eve of the Yom Kippur war — is conducting an extensive range of exercises, ranging from large-scale manœuvres in

the field, with the participation of thousands of personnel, to communications exercises and command exercises.

“Egypt has also set up two large-scale systems of entrancements, encompassing 350 outposts along the east bank of Suez, an area which was at one time under Israeli control. This giant system could absorb five Egyptian divisions within a matter of hours.

“In addition to all these signs, the Egyptians are systematically violating the separation-of-forces agreement with Israel, and maintaining twice as many (or more) troops in the area than permitted under the agreement”.

Lieut. Gen. Gur also told Yediot Aharonot that “Although we have clear reports on the preparations of the Egyptian army to go to war as 1978 approaches, we should be prepared for this to happen even before that date (and so indeed we shall), and after that date as well of course, we must confine our thinking to any particular time, place or concept. We have fully learned the lessons of the Yom Kippur War.”, the Chief of Staff concluded.

## **71. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel radio, 16 November 1977.**

*The Foreign Minister addressed himself mainly to the issue of the answers that Israel will be expected to give Sadat either during his visit to Jerusalem or after this event. Mr. Dayan saw the visit as an indication that after thirty years of war and hostility, the Arabs have changed their position and are willing to embark on the negotiating path even while Israel was still in occupation of what they considered Arab territory. Mr. Dayan also discussed the nature of peace, peace borders and the Palestinians. Text of the interview:*

**Q.** Were you surprised by President Sadat's latest move, or were your mysterious talks in Europe a preparation for this?

**A.** At all events, I was surprised.

**Q.** You did not expect such a visit?

**A.** No. Definitely not. I did not expect a personal, public visit by the President of Egypt. Even the most favourable expectations I could imagine took into account only possibilities of unofficial contacts: That is not with Sadat or not for public knowledge, and certainly not in the Knesset in Jerusalem.

**Q.** The President of Egypt has again overcome the barrier of fear and has taken a step which if should it fail, is liable to cost him his life — and we will perhaps face the threat of a new war. What step will Israel take in preparation for the talks with him in Jerusalem? What will we offer him, and will we show any political courage?

**A.** First of all, I am not entirely certain that he has overcome the barrier of fear. I hope that this will be the case, but we must wait until he returns from Damascus. Secondly, I fear that we shall simply not have to confront a situation in which we shall have to give him substantive replies. At all events, so far he has made two reservations. Firstly, he said that he would not make a separate, Egyptian peace, and secondly, that he would not speak on behalf of the other Arab states. If he were ready to make an independent, separate peace between Israel and Egypt, and he came and made specific proposals, then we would be obliged to give him an answer. But he has said — and I assume that this is how things will

be — that he does not want to do that. He will not conduct negotiations for peace, and he certainly will not be authorized to do so in the name of the other Arab states, and he has already said that his visit here is not and will not be a substitute for the Geneva Conference. Therefore I fear — and I do not say this with pleasure — that in the end he will not confront Israel with a situation in which it will have to give concrete answers, because he will not want to conduct concrete negotiations.

**Q.** Despite what you have just said, is it your assessment that President Sadat will be able to leave Israel empty-handed. In other words that Israel will not promise him anything that will enable him to pursue the political option, or the continuation of the fantastic option he has now chosen?

**A.** I wouldn't say "fantastic": He has chosen a certain step. I think that even if Sadat himself, personally, can leave here without a concrete answer. Israel will not be in a situation — vis-a-vis the entire world — in which it will be able to be satisfied. During Sadat's visit, only with listening and not reacting, as I said earlier, I believe that Sadat himself will not want to bring about the issues to the point of concreteness, for the reasons I mentioned previously. But he will have his say, and his remarks will have wide reverberations. We can pretty well conjecture the framework of his remarks, or not conjecture, but recall what he has stated in the past. His basic demands are withdrawal from all the territories and the right of the Palestinians to establish a Palestinian State, in return for which he will very probably promise peace. He will not be able to speak on behalf of all the Arab states. He will speak for Egypt. And let us suppose that Israel replied: "Very well. Let us sign a peace agreement including total withdrawal from Egypt's borders" — then he would say: "Gentlemen. No. I am not ready for that. I did not come to make a separate peace with you." I think Israel will not be exempt from replying to the questions he has put, even if he, personally, not only does not request, but even refuses to listen to a concrete answer which entails bilateral undertakings.

**Q.** I heard that yesterday you told a meeting of senior Foreign Ministry staff that our problem is answers and that in fact we have no answers.

**A.** No. I'm glad that there are no leaks — at least not accurate ones — from that forum.

**Q.** That is why I requested confirmation.

**A.** Fine. Then the denial is of that section which says we have no answers. I said that all the preparations of flags and flowers and anthems and fanfares and trumpets notwithstanding. In fact the principal preparations we must make are for the serious political reactions to this visit, which will have worldwide reverberations, and will deal with the central issue — that of peace — and perhaps also with the possibility, even if he does not say so explicitly, of war. Israel must have answers ready. Under no circumstances did I say that we had no answers, and I have no doubt that we will have answers.

**Q.** Do you regard the very fact that Sadat is coming to Jerusalem as an achievement in itself, or, even if he does not come, is his very declaration that he might come an achievement in itself, and one which could bring about the end of Israel's international isolation?

**A.** Well, a good deal would be needed to change the fact of Israel's international isolation, and this will not depend only on his visit, if it takes place. For our isolation is also felt in Europe and other parts of the world. I definitely would regard the visit in itself as an achievement, if it takes place. The achievement lies in the fact that until now this same Sadat has stated on various occasions that he would not meet with Israeli representatives so long as Israel held Arab territory — that he would not sit at one table with us. And now

he is ready to do so, that is, he is ready for a dialogue without making it conditional on our withdrawal. If he does not come, then I would hesitate to say that we should regard it as an achievement that he wanted to come but did not. I recall the time when King Abdullah co-initialled a document with us, and was assassinated, and the result in the Arab world was not encouraging, was not a breakthrough. Therefore if Sadat, let us say, returns from Damascus, and says that after meeting with the other Arab leaders he believes it is preferable to preserve a united Arab front, etc., and cancels his visit (to Israel), then I am not sure we should regard this as a breakthrough. Perhaps it will serve as a lesson to other Arab leaders that one can only get hurt by this kind of attempt and does not succeed in it.

**Q.** Sadat has to some extent dissipated the taboo on us as lepers: Is not the very fact that he is considering the meeting something positive?

**A.** In my view, if he cancels the visit the effect will be entirely negative, and I do not think that we, or anyone else in the world, thinks we are lepers and that he is a purifier of lepers. The question is whether the Arabs are ready to meet with us, and not whether we are lepers, and should it emerge that such an attempt has failed because of Arab pressure, that will deter the others. For our good name we do not need Sadat, and I do not think any good would come of this. On the contrary: I think that such an abortive attempt would deter others.

**Q.** In your answer to the first question you said "In any event, I was surprised". Do you mean that the general feeling that Sadat is again initiating a surprise move, is again gaining the support of international public opinion, is correct, and that we are again being dragged behind?

**A.** That is not my feeling. Again.. surprising...being dragged... what do you mean by being dragged? Sadat said he would come to the Knesset. In what way are we being dragged when we say he should come and that we shall welcome him gladly? What could we do? Bring him here by force? We were ready to go there. They did not want to welcome us. We were ready for open and direct talks. They did not want them. What Sadat is doing now is nothing surprising or unreasonable. Sadat is doing now, or promising to do now, what he refused to do until now, he and others. Any meetings there occasionally were with Arab leaders were, on their part, surreptitious, not open. He has decided to take another step forward. Why should we interpret that as a sign of weakness, or being dragged, on our part? On the contrary, I see that as an achievement, not because we have managed to complicate matters by some trick, but because while Israel has been adamant about her position throughout the years, it is now apparent that the Arabs have changed their position, or one of them has, at least, and he is saying: We must talk with the Israelis even while they are occupying territories, and have meetings and talks before laying down conditions. The Sadat, who in 1970, laid down as a condition, prior to going to Rhodes, which was then being planned, that Israel agree to retreat from all the territories, including the Gaza Strip, has changed. Imagine what would have happened if we had changed our minds like that. You would all be saying, "Look how inconsistent we are, and how we change our minds." It is Sadat who changed his mind, not us.

**Q.** Has Israel contributed in any way, in the recent political moves, to what is happening now?

**A.** I do not know whether she contributed to this move. I certainly cannot say that this is exactly what I planned what I was aiming at, and — look, it is all happening, as I thought it would. In my opinion this government has contributed much, with consistence and determination, to Israel's readiness-willingness to talk with the Arabs. Despite all the

criticism that this determined government announces that it is ready to sit down with a Palestinian delegation, a united Arab delegation etc... that it is ready to go to Geneva without prior talks with the Americans on substantive matters. We have definitely reached the stage, from Israel's point of view, and from Egypt's, that Geneva is a concrete possibility. Other Arab states may put a stop to it, but the moves made by Israel in connection with Sadat's visit, the positive moves, and there are such, are expressed in her willingness to sit at the negotiations table with the Arabs and her readiness to meet them on both procedural and substantive issues, because the paper we gave to the Americans on the substantive issues — the rough draft of a peace agreement, was phrased in such a way that, even in substantive matters, and not just in procedure. Great steps have been taken towards the possibility of holding talks with the Arabs, and the Arabs will most probably hear about them.

**Q.** Sadat is bringing some sort of message with him and will be expecting some sort of reaction. Will our reaction be as it has always been that everything is open to negotiation. What is he coming here for?

**A.** Perhaps what you are saying is what in fact will happen. I am not speaking on behalf of the government. I am only speaking for myself. I do not know exactly what he will say, but assuming that what he has said so far, in anticipation of his visit, will not change. If he really came and said, "I have come here, and I am ready to sit down here, as I said at first, three, four, or five days, and come to some sort of arrangement." Israel would have to sit down, and I would recommend this very strongly, and hold talks with him, despite Geneva, to which we are already committed, and see whether we could reach an agreement with him. I very much fear that it will be he, and not Israel, who will not want that. It will not be us who will be in a position in which it will be said that Sadat comes to us with a message and we back away. Let's say that he finishes his brilliant and convincing speech, and I hope it will be convincing, he explains the Arab position — he says, "I want to explain the Arab position to the members of the Knesset" — and we all believe him.. We still believe that Sadat wants peace - we know that sort of talk — and we say to him, "Fine, come and let's sit down and sign an agreement. Let's talk and sign a peace treaty." I'm afraid he will say, "No, I cannot come to a separate agreement with you. I am not authorized to make any comprehensive agreement. I came to explain our position, and even if you want to give an answer, whatever it is, no peace agreement will come out of it. We will go home, and then to Geneva, and then we will discuss peace." I don't think it will be Israel that retreats or hesitates. It will be Israel that will say "We are ready for anything, come and let's negotiate." I think he will be the one to say "I am not ready for everything."

**Q.** Why do you think he is coming? After all he does not need the Knesset.

**A.** I cannot speak for him. I do not know what he is thinking. I think that Sadat has been thrust into a situation in which he is pulled between two poles. On the one hand he wants to get things moving and present his case as a kind of ultimatum, as a sort of alibi: "Listen, you have a chance of achieving peace, in exchange for — withdraw from the areas and you will have peace. I, the President of Egypt, say so." This is the positive aspect, and this is what is motivating him, in my opinion. But, on the other hand, he does not come with practical authority, he can go as far as saying that, and if we say to him, "Right, we are ready to sign a peace treaty, let's sit down in the next room and sign any agreement." I think he will say, "I cannot do that." "So what did you come for?" "I came to tell you that one thing, so that you should be prepared for it. As for the actual signing, that I have to do with the other Arab states, not here but in Geneva. Not on a hurried theatrical visit but

with officers, and maps, with Syria and Jordan and the Palestinians and so on." I think that is his situation, being pulled in two directions, so he can say that this is a performance, or a move in various stages, that he is making the first, opening move but that it is not the final one.

**Q.** I understand that you too do not see Sadat's move as an alternative to Geneva.

**A.** That's right, and that is because of this situation. If Sadat were ready to negotiate with us here, directly, and to sign a peace agreement, I would be ready to do it now, now, without Geneva, and without all the others, and not because I want to drive a wedge between him and the others. If he came and said that he was ready, I would rather do it with him immediately than say "wait a moment, we are only prepared to sit in Geneva".

**Q.** Will you try to make him sign? Maybe Egypt wants to cut herself off from the rest of the Arab world. Would you say to him "lets talk about Egypt's interests, forget about the Palestinians and about Judea and Samaria for a moment"?

**A.** If such an approach were not to be interpreted as an attempt to drive a wedge, not negatively received, I would do it, and I would recommend to the P.M. that it should be done, but I'm afraid that if we do it, in spite of his reservations, knowing full well that he will refuse, it would be interpreted as a hostile move towards him and the others. I think that from a practical point of view it should not be done. However, if there is any shadow of hope, the slightest chance, that he would agree, I would recommend that we do it immediately and with all our hearts. But, I must repeat, you are talking as if Sadat had not already made himself perfectly clear on this issue. He has said repeatedly, quite clearly, that he will not sign a separate agreement with Israel, that he will not negotiate here, that negotiations must be carried out in Geneva, and that his visit here is not a substitute for Geneva. He has said all this, he even attacked P.M. Begin for addressing the Egyptian people instead of the whole Arab world. And indeed yesterday evening, in his speech in the Knesset, Mr. Begin addressed all the Arab leaders, and the representatives of the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria, in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, and I was very glad that he did that, that he addressed the representatives of the Palestinian Arabs.

**Q.** Why should there not be a split in the Arab world. What would be wrong with it?

**A.** There is nothing wrong with a split. What would be bad would be to try to cause a split and fail and that is what would happen.

**Q.** Do you think that, if Sadat does come to Jerusalem, that would constitute Egyptian de jure recognition of Israel?

**A.** I do not think so, de jure recognition is something very specific, which must be stated explicitly, etc. The visit will be what it is — in its positive aspects, and it may possibly even be accompanied by negative aspects.

**Q.** Mr. Dayan, in what way are you preparing yourself for this visit?

**A.** As far as I personally am concerned, only on one issue: By thinking, reflection, consultations with others on what Israel's reaction should be — and I mentioned this at the beginning of the interview — even if Sadat is not ready to translate his approach into concrete terms. We may have to react, and his appeal will have worldwide reverberations. What will Israel's reaction be? What should it be? These are the matters that are engaging me prior to his arrival.

**Q.** Will your trip to West Germany take place next week?

**A.** If Sadat comes here next week, I shall request that it be postponed.

**Q.** Yesterday, the Chief of Staff was in effect, reprimanded in the Knesset for the remarks he made as regards Egyptian war preparations. How do you assess the political

option Egypt is following as opposed to the war option which is perhaps also being considered in Cairo?

A. Without any connection with the Chief of Staff — that is a matter between him and the Defence Minister — I have stated, and I am ready to reiterate here, that if, in the end, the political moves fail, we must take into account that the Arabs may launch another round of war.

Q. As all this came about through reciprocal declarations between Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat, don't you think that to some extent the United States is being shifted from its mediating position. If Sadat is ready to respond to Begin's challenge?

A. First of all, Sadat did not respond to any challenge: he was the initiator — and the positive feature in the Prime Minister of Israel's statements was that he responded to what Sadat said. But it was not some kind of dialogue which developed into a visit. Sadat said what he said unilaterally, and the Prime Minister welcomed his remarks. I have no fears for the position of the United States. I do not think that position is deteriorating, or collapsing, or has even been weakened to any extent, and I do not think the Americans are worried over this step.

Q. In the light of these developments, what do you expect of the Geneva Conference?

A. It is still too early to say, but in the most general way, I wholeheartedly believe that we are now in the period of serious negotiations, which holds out possibilities for peace. We may divide Israel's history into periods, each of which had its own emphases, which stemmed from the needs of that particular period. There were periods when aliya (immigration) was at the centre of our life: Before the establishment of the state — the "second wave of immigration" — and then, after the establishment of the state, the period of mass immigration. There were periods in which war was the central thing: First and foremost, in my opinion, the War of Independence in 1948 — that was the war that determined Israel's existence and territory. Even the Yom Kippur war, with all its importance, was a war of defence. There were periods in which settlement was the principal subject.

We are now entering a period in which the key issue is the possibility of attaining peace with the Arabs. However, for the sake of precision, not only precision but correct definition, this issue is composed of two parts: Not only whether it is possible to attain peace — which is of supreme importance in itself — but also what Israel's natural borders will be: Not only peace but also the determination of Israel's borders. That, then, is the major subject, and whether or not Geneva gives results, we shall return to this subject. Nor do I think Sadat's visit is coincidental. Why is this subject a central one? Because it is not only we want this, but the Arabs, too, in one form or another, and it makes no difference if we say they want it, or need it, or are being pushed into it by the Americans, or by the European approach to the matter. This issue, then, is today, in my view, the political — perhaps even the historic — framework of the central subject in our life. Geneva is one of the possibilities of doing this thing — and if it fails, and this subject does not stop being a central one, then other frameworks will be found, or such attempts will be made again. But I expect of Geneva the possibility of achieving the full or partial fruit of the needs of this period. This is a period in which peace settlements or something like them should be determined between ourselves and the Arabs, and as part of that process, also Israel's natural borders.

Q. But what chance does Geneva have if the American position is very close to the Arab stand and we do not accept it?



A. That is the way things are, and we shall have to stand up for what we want. We have two advantages which to a large extent counterbalance the alignment of forces. The first is that we hold the (administered) territories. It is not that we are asking something of them and the U.S. and Arab stand is identical: that they do not have to give this — and we haven't the strength to get it from them. But they are demanding that we pull out of territories, and we do not want to withdraw from those areas as regards which the United States supports the Arab position that we should withdraw. I do not think the United States will exert military pressure on us. The fact that we are there, that we are holding Judea and Samaria, the Golan Heights, Sinai: that is the critical fact. We are there, and if they don't send in the marines against us the question will ultimately be one of Israel's internal strength and stability.

The second thing is our capacity for living together with the Arabs. For the present, I believe we are showing good sense and a capacity to live together with the Arabs in the (administered) territories. That is to say: If Geneva fails, or if we do not want to agree to what the Americans and the Arabs demand of us, we have an alternative, that is something of supreme importance. We could not enter into negotiations with meagre prospects if we did not have an alternative and had to accept what was demanded of us. We are in a situation in which we can say: "You are demanding things of us which we are not ready to accept, so we can go home and go on living as we are now." Perhaps this will prove a disappointment to the people of Israel, and we won't want it. But I would very strongly encourage ourselves to understand this, and be prepared that, within certain limits, limits of demands, if we are called upon for something that Israel is not ready for — that we shall be ready to go on living even without peace. If we are not ready for this we shall have absolutely no bargaining power in negotiations.

Q. Are you prepared to say what that limit is? Not the geographical limit, I mean the principle.

A. I am prepared to repeat the definitions of this and other governments, but I want to emphasise the difference in the way this government puts them. In general, this government, like its predecessors, has said that it will not come down from the Golan Heights, that we are prepared to make significant concessions in Sinai, we are prepared to live together with the Arabs in Judea and Samaria, but we are not prepared for foreign sovereignty. You and the listeners know the whole theory. In addition, this government has said that those are our positions. It has said, "We are going to Geneva with no prior conditions, and the Arabs are free to present their positions, and we shall negotiate with them with an open mind and an open heart." In other words, what I have defined so far is Israel's position. Only a few days ago, the P.M. said, with reference to a Palestinian State, that if Sadat recommends, or suggests, or demands the establishment of a Palestinian State, he is perfectly entitled to do so, and the P.M. did not say that we should not be prepared to discuss it. In other words, Pres. Sadat is entitled to raise such a suggestion because that is what going to Geneva without prior conditions means. Each party will submit its position and the discussion will be over those very positions, we oppose the establishment of a Palestinian State, but we do not oppose his right to raise the issue as a proposal of his, and we are not saying that if he proposes it we have nothing to discuss. Similarly, we are not prepared to accept any particular Arab position in advance and say that we accept it before the Geneva talks even begin. That is why, when you asked me what the limits of the Israeli position are, I wanted to say that I don't know if those are the limits, that these are the positions regarding the Israeli stand on the Golan Heights, on

Sinai, Judea and Samaria, on the Gaza Strip, and on the Palestinians, the positions as they are known.

**Q.** These are not the last words then?

**A.** I don't know. We go to Geneva, in my opinion, without ultimatums.

**Q.** It appears that with regard to the settlements in Judea and Samaria not much is happening. Gush Emunim people are settling in military camps, and America appears to be acquiescing. Is the government deliberately halting settlement activity, which would be a little surprising coming from a government led by Mr. Begin?

**A.** I neither can, nor do I want to speak on behalf of the government. But for myself I can say that I do not think that the government is halting activities. On the contrary, I see nothing wrong with putting Gush Emunim groups in military camps. At this stage, I don't regard it as an insult or degradation for the army, or a clipping of Gush Emunim's wings that they are going into army camps. Kiryat Arba also began in a military camp of the engineering corps. I was Minister of Defence then. They stayed first in the Hebron police headquarters. First, they came to the Park Hotel — then we took them of there. No settlement without permission, that is still my opinion. Then they moved to the police building, and when permission was given they moved to the army camp of the engineers near Hebron. I see nothing wrong with that, either from their point of view or from the point of view of the army. If there are a number of such settlements, or whatever name we choose to give them, in the near future, 4,5 or 6 of them, and they are put into army camps, why should that be called "halting" activities? I don't regard that as halting. I think that the rate of progress is quite satisfactory, and we are talking only about one area, Samaria. We have not discussed other areas. It is certainly necessary to reinforce existing settlements, Ma'aleh Adumim, or other places, I think that in principle, any group that is ready to settle in the administered territories can find somewhere to settle. Perhaps first of all the existing settlements, in which there are too few people, should be reinforced.

**Q.** And does it not depend on "political" timing?

**A.** Political considerations must definitely be weighed, and they are weighed, and they should be weighed. If they were not, would they not exist? They exist. Both the fact that we are on the eve of the Geneva Conference, and the position of the U.S. and even the position of the General Assembly, we neither can nor should ignore them. The question is how. In the circumstances, not to halt or to decide to stop settlement altogether, and how to do what we can in view of the situation. In my opinion, things are being done, and not at a slow pace, and the activities are not being halted.

**Q.** In the light of the Security Council's resolution concerning an embargo of South Africa, what in fact is Israel's stand?

**A.** Let us begin with the embargo: Israel will act in accordance with what the Security Council has decided. Israel will not defy that decision or act otherwise on a subject on which the Security Council has passed a resolution. Secondly, we have no hidden, under-the-table ties with the government of South Africa, and the political and economic aspects of our relations with it are open and clear. On the subject of apartheid and the internal repressions there from time to time, we are opposed to them no less than other countries — and I have requested our representative at the United Nations to vote against South Africa, that is to vote for a resolution condemning South Africa. In those instances when the United States votes in that way, on those cases of internal repression connected with apartheid, we have no little difficulty in this matter, because many U.N. resolutions link condemnation of Israel with condemnation of South Africa, and I hope that no one expects that we

shall also regard ourselves as a part of South Africa and vote for condemnation of ourselves. But we shall not hesitate, not only to express our opinion — and this we are doing from various international rostrums — against apartheid, but also to vote, in the U.N. framework, in condemnation of that regime. However, if an Israeli Minister should have to go to South Africa to open a campaign for the United Jewish Appeal or for Israel Bonds, I will support that trip. I do not think we have to cut ourselves off from South Africa, or to weaken our relations with it, beyond what the Security Council has decided.

**Q.** What of the rest of the continent of Africa: Is there any news?

**A.** In general, in the political sphere, there is no news, but Israel has many economic ties with Africa — perhaps even more and broader ones than in the period when we maintained political relations with all or most of the African nations.

**Q.** I should like to return to a subject which we left behind, having reached Africa. When you speak of living together in Judea and Samaria, what do you mean? After the six-day war there was much Jewish traffic to and within Judea and Samaria, but all this has now been muted. People are afraid to go there. What kind of “Living together” do you see?

**A.** First of all, I do not think people are afraid to go there. Perhaps there are those who are afraid, or there may be other reasons why they do not go. At first they went out of curiosity, now that the entire house of Israel has been and seen, there is less enthusiasm for going there. In my opinion, it is more dangerous to walk down the street in Tel Aviv than in the Gaza Strip, and if you examine the cases of murder and rape and all violent acts in Tel Aviv or in Jerusalem or in Israel as a whole — as compared with the virtually non-existent cases of violence in the (administered) areas, then you should be afraid to go to Ramat Gan via that bridge adjacent to the Tel Aviv train terminal.

Let us take as an example the settlements — Dozens of settlements in the territories, including the Gaza Strip and the Jordan Rift: Well, people travel there, they don't sit shut up in their houses, they go out to work and travel to every town or city.

Do you ever hear of any difficulty experienced by the people living in those settlements? Buses go through the Jordan Valley: do you ever hear of them being attacked or harassed? What you said, then, is incorrect, it is factually wrong.

But you asked what I meant by living together. Well, in this period I mean that Jews will be able to settle there, to purchase land and to reside there, without displacing the Arabs, without wanting to try to dispossess them — and the Arabs will be able to live in those same areas with free access to Israel and unhindered contact with the Arab countries, and we shall reside not one in place of another, and not with a line dividing one from the other, but side by side. Kiryat Arba next to Hebron. The best illustration of this is Jerusalem — as life goes on now in Jerusalem. For if you speak of a line dividing East Jerusalem (from West Jerusalem), this is not even a physical matter, for it is difficult today to speak of the physical partition of Jerusalem, but to transfer the sovereignty over East Jerusalem to the Arabs, and we must remember that this would include Mount Scopus, the Hebrew University, Hadassah and the Jewish Quarter. Does anyone even conceive of such a possibility?

I think that objectively there is simply no line by which you can partition the West Bank or the Gaza Strip in a way acceptable to both sides. If there is no such line — and for ten years we tried to sell the Allon Plan to the Arabs, and today not only is there no Arab who is ready for that, but even the Americans are not proposing it — I know that Allon still supports it, but the Americans with all their pro-Arab proposals are not suggesting partition of the West Bank — neither the Allon Plan nor anything resembling it — if,

then, there is no such line, what is there? There is one possibility. Namely our total withdrawal from there with minor adjustments and transformation of the West Bank into a Palestinian State: Or, if not that and not partition — and if the Arabs suggest partition we shall take it under consideration — if not partition, then to find some *modus vivendi* together in which it will be laid down what the rights of the Arabs are and what the rights of the Israelis are, without incorporating that territory either within Jordanian Sovereignty or in a Palestinian state or within Israeli Sovereignty.

## **72. Statement by Prime Minister Begin on the Sadat visit, 17 November 1977.**

*On Thursday, 17 November 1977, U.S. Ambassador Lewis informed Prime Minister Begin that President Sadat wanted to start his visit on Saturday, after the end of the Sabbath. Shortly after the Sadat acceptance of Mr. Begin's invitation was received, the Prime Minister appeared before the Israeli and foreign media at his office. He read the following statement and answered a number of questions:*

Yesterday morning I received the first announcement, from the American Ambassador to Israel, my friend Mr. Lewis, that President Sadat might possibly want to arrive here on Saturday evening. For understandable reasons, we had to keep this an absolute secret for 24 hours — and we succeeded in this — because it was not yet clear whether the news would become fact.

In the evening I was asked by the American Ambassador, on behalf of Egyptian Vice-President Mubarak whether, if President Sadat should decide to come on Saturday evening, what time he might and should come so the Sabbath would not be desecrated, and I requested that he be told that between 7:30 and 8:00 P.M. would be a fitting time: So that there would be at least two hours to get to the airport from all corners of the country, without any desecration of the Sabbath. And, if I might add, without any need for Poalei Agudat Yisrael to table in the Knesset a motion of non-confidence because of President Sadat's visit. Everything will take place after the end of the Sabbath.

During the day we received further announcements, and this afternoon the information was in fact received that the President of Egypt would like to come here on Saturday evening, that is, the day after tomorrow. He will be arriving between 7:30 and 8:00 P.M. Tomorrow morning a plane from Egypt will arrive here, with President Sadat's Chef de Bureau and several dozen Egyptians. They will of course be received by us as guests, and they will bring us the music to the Egyptian national anthem as well as Egyptian flags — two very desirable aims.

President Sadat will stay at the King David hotel. He will be with us for two nights, until Monday morning.

On Sunday morning, President Sadat wishes to worship at the Al Aqsa Mosque. We shall of course make all the necessary preparations to enable him to pray there, at this holy place to Islam. After he attends the service, I should like him to accompany me on a visit to "Yad Vashem" (Holocaust memorial), but he has not yet received this suggestion, he will hear it from me on Saturday evening. I hope he accepts the idea, but in the end it is up to him.

After the prayer service the President of Egypt has proposed holding talks with me, and I imagine that there will be friends of his and friends of mine at these talks. The composition of the delegations has not yet been determined.

On Sunday afternoon the Knesset will be convened in special session, at 4 or 5 P.M. and President Sadat will deliver his address from the Knesset rostrum. After he concludes, I shall deliver a speech. We do not yet know in what language the speeches will be made, if he speaks in Arabic I will speak in Hebrew, and if he speaks in English, so will I.

After the special Knesset session, we are planning for a possible festive dinner, though this is not yet final: It depends on our guests's areement, and there might be more talks.

Upon concluding his statement the Prime Minister was asked several questions by reporters:

**Q.** What do you think will be achieved by the visit to Israel of President Sadat?

**A.** The very fact of the visit is important. In the first place, this is the first time since the establishment of the State of Israel that an Arab ruler — the President of Egypt — is visiting our country, will come to Jerusalem. Secondly, he will address the Knesset: That is something rare. I hope he will invite me to come to Cairo, and that I will soon make a visit to Cairo, where I, too, will no doubt address the Egyptian parliament, and we shall continue our dialogue. We will be holding important talks. Of course, we will first listen: It is the duty of the hosts to let the guest have his say, and then we shall reply. I hope that this will constitute the start of serious negotiations for the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

**Q.** Mr. Begin, is there any tendency on Israel's part to sign a separate peace agreement with Egypt?

**A.** If President Sadat puts forth a peace agreement and we agree to the conditions, certainly we would sign a peace treaty, but you used the word "separate". And I should at once like to comment: Ever since I invited President Sadat, rumor has been rife throughout the Middle East to the effect that there is some sort of Israeli intention to drive a wedge between the Arab states, on the basis of the ancient Roman concept of "divide and rule". We do not want to divide. We do not want to rule. We are a small country seeking peace: True peace, with true security, and we have no intention of causing division between the Arab states. We want peace: In the South, the East and the North, in all sectors. That is the reason that in my Knesset statement on Tuesday I invited President Assad of Syria and King Hussein and also President Sarkis of Lebanon. I hope we shall meet with them too, whether in Jerusalem or in their countries or at a neutral site. But certainly we would be happy to sign a peace treaty with all our neighbours together or with each of them.

**Q.** Are there any Israeli conditions whatsoever in anticipation of the talks with President Sadat?

**A.** There are no prior conditions, either of Egypt or of Israel, in anticipation of this meeting. I should like to explain what are prior conditions: For example, several months ago President Sadat said that, to get a meeting with him, I would have to inform him of a commitment to withdraw to the lines of 4 June 1967. I would not give such a commitment, nor did I. Now he is coming here without that prior condition.

Thus, he makes no prior conditions. He will present his stand: We are cognizant of it, and our position vis-a-vis his position is also known to ourselves and to him. Both sides will put forth their positions. There are fundamental differences of opinion between us — but we shall begin to talk of peace.

Nor are we putting forth prior conditions, for example : It is known that there is general national agreement that this Jerusalem in which we are now standing must be unified, one city, the Eternal Capital of Israel. That is our position and I shall so inform President Sadat when he comes. But we did not put forth as a condition his prior agreement to accept our stand vis-a-vis Jerusalem, before we agreed to receive him in Jerusalem, or before we agreed to meet in Geneva. There are no prior conditions, either on the part of Egypt or on the part of Israel, in anticipation of this meeting, and I hope the same will hold true for other meetings. Rather, each side presents his positions, and that is how negotiations for peace are conducted.

**Q.** How will this affect the Geneva Conference?

**A.** There is no connection. We are for the Geneva Conference, if agreement is reached on procedure as regards that peace conference, with all the parties, we shall willingly participate in the Geneva Conference.

### **73. Statement to the Knesset by President Sadat, 20 November 1977.**

*President Sadat arrived at Ben-Gurion airport on Saturday evening, 19 November, and was given a full state welcoming ceremony. There were no speeches at the airport, from where President Sadat and President Katsir drove to Jerusalem. After his arrival, President Sadat had his first meeting with Mr. Begin. The next morning, after prayers at the Al Aksa mosque in Jerusalem, and visits to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Yad Vashem, President Sadat, Prime Minister Begin and Labour Party Chairman Peres addressed a special session of the Knesset. President Sadat spoke in Arabic. The following translation of his speech was issued by the Office of the President of Egypt:*

In the name of God, the Gracious and Merciful.

Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Peace and the mercy of God Almighty be upon you and may peace be for us all, God willing. Peace for us all on the Arab land, and in Israel as well, as in every part of this big world, which is so complexed by its sanguinary conflicts, disturbed by its sharp contradictions, menaced now and then by destructive wars launched by man to annihilate his fellow man. Finally, amidst the ruins of what man has built and the remains of the victims of Mankind, there emerges neither victor nor vanquished. The only vanquished remains man, God's most sublime creation, man whom God has created — as Ghandi the apostle of paece puts it: to forge ahead to mould the way of life and worship God Almighty.

I come to you today on solid ground, to shape a new life, to establish peace. We all, on this land, the land of God; we all, Muslims, Christians and Jews, worship God and no one but God. God's teachings and commandments are love, sincerity, purity and peace.

I do not blame all those who received my decision — when I announced it to the entire world before the Egyptian People's Assembly — with surprise and amazement. Some, gripped by the violent surprise, believed that my decision was no more than verbal juggling to cater for world public opinion. Others, still, interpreted it as political tactics to camouflage my intention of launching a new war. I would go as far as to tell you that one of my aides at the Presidential Office contacted me at a late hour following my return home

from the People's Assembly and sounded worried as he asked me: "Mr. President, what would be our reaction if Israel should actually extend an invitation to you?" I replied calmly, I will accept it immediately. I have declared that I will go to the end of the world; I will go to Israel, for I want to put before the People of Israel all the facts.

I can see the point of all those who were astounded by my decision or those who had any doubts as to the sincerity of the intentions behind the declaration of my decision. No one would have ever conceived that the President of the biggest Arab State, which bears the heaviest burden and the top responsibility pertaining to the cause of war and peace in the Middle East, could declare his readiness to go to the land of the adversary while we were still in a state of war. Rather, we all are still bearing the consequences of four fierce wars waged within thirty years. The families of the 1973 October War are still moaning under the cruel pains of widowhood and bereavement of sons, fathers and brothers.

As I have already declared, I have not consulted, as far as this decision is concerned, with any of my colleagues and brothers, the Arab Heads of State or the confrontation States. Those of them who contacted me, following the declaration of this decision, expressed their objection, because the feeling of utter suspicion and absolute lack of confidence between the Arab States and the Palestinian People on the one hand, and Israel on the other, still surges in us all. It is sufficient to say that many months in which peace could have been brought about had been wasted over differences and fruitless discussions on the procedure for the convocation of the Geneva Conference, all showing utter suspicion and absolute lack of confidence.

But, to be absolutely frank with you, I took this decision after long thinking, knowing that it constitutes a grave risk for, if God Almighty has made it my fate to assume the responsibility on behalf of the Egyptian People and to share in the fate-determining responsibility of the Arab Nation and the Palestinian People, the main duty dictated by this responsibility is to exhaust all and every means in a bid to save my Egyptian Arab People and the entire Arab Nation the horrors of new, shocking and destructive wars, the dimensions of which are foreseen by no other than God himself.

After long thinking, I was convinced that the obligation of responsibility before God, and before the people, make it incumbent on me that I should go to the farthest corner of the world, even to Jerusalem, to address Members of the Knesset, the representatives of the People of Israel, and acquaint them with all the facts surging in me. Then, I would leave you to decide for yourselves. Following this, may God Almighty determine our fate.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are moments in the life of nations and peoples when it is incumbent on those known for their wisdom and clarity of vision to overlook the past, with all its complexities and weighing memories, in a bold drive towards new horizons. Those who, like us, are shouldering the same responsibility entrusted to us, are the first who should have the courage to take fate-determining decisions which are in consonance with the circumstances. We must all rise above all forms of fanaticism, self-deception and obsolete theories of superiority. The most important thing is never to forget that infallibility is the prerogative of God alone.

If I said that I wanted to save all the Arab People the horrors of shocking and destructive wars, I most sincerely declare before you that I have the same feelings and bear the same responsibility towards all and every man on earth, and certainly towards the Israeli People.

Any life lost in war is a human life, irrespective of its being that of an Israeli or an Arab. A wife who becomes a widow is a human being entitled to a happy family life,

whether she be an Arab or an Israeli. Innocent children who are deprived of the care and compassion of their parents are ours, be they living on Arab or Israeli land. They command our top responsibility to afford them a comfortable life today and tomorrow.

For the sake of them all, for the safeguard of the lives of all our sons and brothers, for affording our communities the opportunity to work for the progress and happiness of man and his right to a dignified life, for our responsibilities before the generations to come, for a smile on the face of every child born on our land — for all that, I have taken my decision to come to you, despite all hazards, to deliver my address.

I have shouldered the prerequisites of the historical responsibility and, therefore, I declared — on 4 February 1971, to be precise — that I was willing to sign a peace agreement with Israel. This was the first declaration made by a responsible Arab official since the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Motivated by all these factors dictated by the responsibilities of leadership, I called, on 16 October 1973, before the Egyptian People's Assembly, for an international conference to establish permanent peace based on justice. I was not in the position of he who was pleading for peace or asking for a ceasefire.

Motivated by all these factors dictated by duties of history and leadership, we signed the first disengagement agreement, followed by the second disengagement agreement in Sinai. Then we proceeded trying both open and closed doors in a bid to find a certain path leading to a durable and just peace. We opened our hearts to the peoples of the entire world to make them understand our motivations and objectives, and to leave them actually convinced of the fact that we are advocates of justice and peace-makers.

Motivated by all these factors, I decided to come to you with an open mind and an open heart, and with a conscious determination, so that we might establish permanent peace based on justice.

It is so fated that my trip to you, the trip of peace, should coincide with the Islamic feast, the holy Feast of Courban Bairam, the Feast of Sacrifice when Abraham — peace be upon him — great-grandfather of the Arabs and Jews, submitted to God; I say when God Almighty ordered him, and to Him Abraham went, with dedicated sentiments, not out of weakness, but through a giant spiritual force and by a free will, to sacrifice his very own son, prompted by a firm and unshakable belief in ideals that lend life a profound significance.

This coincidence may carry a new meaning to us all, which may become a genuine aspiration heralding security and peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us be frank with each other, using straight-forward words and a clear conception, with no ambiguity. Let us be frank with each other today while the entire world, both East and West, follows these unparalleled moments which could prove to be a radical turning point in the history of this part of the world, if not in the history of the world as a whole. Let us be frank with each other as we answer this important question: how can we achieve permanent peace based on justice?

I have come to you carrying my clear and frank answer to this big question, so that the people in Israel as well as the whole world might hear it, and so that all those whose devoted prayers ring in my ears, pleading to God Almighty that this historic meeting may eventually lead to the results aspired to by millions, might also hear it.

Before I proclaim my answer, I wish to assure you that, in my clear and frank answer, I am basing myself on a number of facts which no one can deny.

The first fact: no one can build his happiness at the expense of the misery of others.



The second fact: never have I spoken or will ever speak in two languages. Never have I adopted or will adopt two policies. I never deal with anyone except in one language, one policy, and with one face.

The third fact: direct confrontation and a straight line are the nearest and most successful methods to reach a clear objective.

The fourth fact: the call for permanent and just peace, based on respect for the United Nations resolutions, has now become the call of the whole world. It has become a clear expression of the will of the international community, whether in official capitals, where policies are made and decisions taken, or at the level of world public opinion which influences policy-making and decision-taking.

The fifth fact: and this is probably the clearest and most prominent, is that the Arab Nation, in its drive for permanent peace based on justice, does not proceed from a position of weakness or hesitation, but it has the potential of power and stability which tells of a sincere will for peace. The Arab-declared intention stems from an awareness prompted by a heritage of civilization that, to avoid an inevitable disaster that will befall us, you and the entire world, there is no alternative to the establishment of permanent peace based on justice — peace that is not shaken by storms, swayed by suspicion, or jeopardized by ill intentions.

In the light of these facts which I meant to place before you the way I see them, I would also wish to warn you in all sincerity; I warn you against some thoughts that could cross your minds; frankness makes it incumbent upon me to tell you the following:

First: I have not come here for a separate agreement between Egypt and Israel. This is not part of the policy of Egypt. The problem is not that of Egypt and Israel. Any separate peace between Egypt and Israel, or between any Arab confrontation State and Israel, will not bring permanent peace based on justice in the entire region. Rather, even if peace between all the confrontation States and Israel were achieved, in the absence of a just solution to the Palestinian problem, never will there be that durable and just peace upon which the entire world insists today.

Second: I have not come to you to seek a partial peace, namely to terminate the state of belligerency at this stage, and put off the entire problem to a subsequent stage. This is not the radical solution that would steer us to permanent peace.

Equally, I have not come to you for a third disengagement agreement in Sinai, or in the Golan and the West Bank. For this would mean that we are merely delaying the ignition of the fuse; it would mean that we are lacking the courage to confront peace, that we are too weak to shoulder the burdens and responsibilities of a durable peace based on justice.

I have come to you so that together we might build a durable peace based on justice, to avoid the shedding of one single drop of blood from an Arab or an Israeli. It is for this reason that I have proclaimed my readiness to go to the farthest corner of the world.

Here, I would go back to the answer to the big question: how can we achieve a durable peace based on justice?

In my opinion, and I declare it to the whole world from this forum, the answer is neither difficult nor impossible, despite long years of feud, blood vengeance, spite and hatred, and breeding generations on concepts of total rift and deep-rooted animosity. The answer is not difficult, nor is it impossible, if we sincerely and faithfully follow a straight line.

You want to live with us in this part of the world. In all sincerity, I tell you, we welcome you among us, with full security and safety. This, in itself, is a tremendous turning point;

one of the landmarks of a decisive historical change.

We used to reject you. We had our reasons and our claims, yes. We used to brand you as “so-called” Israel, yes. We were together in international conferences and organizations and our representatives did not, and still do not, exchange greetings, yes. This has happened and is still happening.

It is also true that we used to set, as a precondition for any negotiations with you, a mediator who would meet separately with each party. Through this procedure, the talks of the first and second disengagement agreements took place.

Our delegates met in the first Geneva Conference without exchanging a direct word. Yes, this has happened.

Yet, today I tell you, and declare it to the whole world, that we accept to live with you in permanent peace based on justice. We do not want to encircle you or be encircled ourselves by destructive missiles ready for launching, nor by the shells of grudges and hatred. I have announced on more than one occasion that Israel has become a *fait accompli*, recognized by the world, and that the two super powers have undertaken the responsibility of its security and the defence of its existence.

As we really and truly seek peace, we really and truly welcome you to live among us in peace and security.

There was a huge wall between us which you tried to build up over a quarter of a century, but it was destroyed in 1973. It was a wall of a continuously inflammable and escalating psychological warfare. It was a wall of fear of the force that could sweep the entire Arab Nation. It was a wall of propaganda, that we were a Nation reduced to a motionless corpse. Rather, some of you had gone as far as to say that, even after 50 years, the Arabs would not regain any strenght. It was a wall that threatened always with the long arm that could reach and strike anywhere. It was a wall that warned us against extermination and annihilation if we tried to use our legitimate right to liberate the occupied territories. Together we have to admit that that wall fell and collapsed in 1973.

Yet, there remained another wall. This wall constitutes a psychological barrier between us. A barrier of suspicion. A barrier of rejection. A barrier of fear of deception. A barrier of hallucinations around any action, deed or decision. A barrier of cautious and erroneous interpretations of all and every event or statement. It is this psychological barrier which I described in official statements as representing 70 percent of the whole problem.

Today, through my visit to you, I ask you: why don't we stretch our hands with faith and sincerity so that, together, we might destroy this barrier? Why shouldn't ours and your will meet with faith and sincerity, so that together we might remove all suspicion of fear, betrayal and ill intentions? Why don't we stand together with the bravery of men and the boldness of heroes who dedicate themselves to a sublime objective? Why don't we stand together with the same courage and boldness to erect a huge edifice of peace that builds and does not destroy? An edifice that is a beacon for generations to come — the human message for construction, development and the dignity of man? Why should we bequeath to the coming generations the plight of bloodshed, death, orphans, widowhood, family disintegration, and the wailing of victims?

Why don't we believe in the wisdom of God conveyed to us by the Proverbs of Solomon:

*“Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil; but to the counsellors of peace is joy. Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife.”*

Why don't we repeat together from the Psalms of David:

*"Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle. Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts. Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours."*

To tell you the truth, peace cannot be worth its name unless it is based on justice, and not on the occupation of the land of others. It would not be appropriate for you to demand for yourselves what you deny others. With all frankness, and with the spirit that has prompted me to come to you today, I tell you: you have to give up, once and for all, the dreams of conquest, and give up the belief that force is the best method for dealing with the Arabs. You should clearly understand and assimilate the lesson of confrontation between you and us.

Expansion does not pay. To speak frankly, our land does not yield itself to bargaining. It is not even open to argument. To us, the national soil is equal to the holy valley where God Almighty spoke to Moses — peace be upon him. None of us can, or accept to, cede one inch of it, or accept the principle of debating or bargaining over it.

I sincerely tell you that before us today lies the appropriate chance for peace, if we are really serious in our endeavours for peace. It is a chance that time cannot afford once again. It is a chance that, if lost or wasted, the plotter against it will bear the curse of humanity and the curse of history.

What is peace for Israel? It means that Israel lives in the region with her Arab neighbours, in security and safety. To such logic, I say yes. It means that Israel lives within her borders, secure against any aggression. To such logic, I say yes. It means that Israel obtains all kinds of guarantees that ensure those two factors. To this demand, I say yes. More than that: we declare that we accept all the international guarantees you envisage and accept. We declare that we accept all the guarantees you want from the two super powers or from either of them, or from the Big Five, or some of them.

Once again, I declare clearly and unequivocally that we agree to any guarantees you accept because, in return, we shall obtain the same guarantees.

In short, then, when we ask: what is peace for Israel, the answer would be: it is that Israel live within her borders with her Arab neighbours, in safety and security within the framework of all the guarantees she accepts and which are offered to the other party. But how can this be achieved? How can we reach this conclusion which would lead us to permanent peace based on justice?

There are facts that should be faced with all courage and clarity. There are Arab territories which Israel has occupied by armed force. We insist on complete withdrawal from these territories, including Arab Jerusalem.

I have come to Jerusalem, as the City of Peace, which will always remain as a living embodiment of coexistence among believers of the three religions. It is inadmissible that anyone should conceive the special status of the City of Jerusalem within the framework of annexation or expansionism, but it should be a free and open city for all believers.

Above all, the city should not be severed from those who have made it their abode for centuries. Instead of awakening the prejudices of the Crusaders, we should revive the spirit of Omar ibn el-Khattab and Saladdin, namely the spirit of tolerance and respect for

rights. The holy shrines of Islam and Christianity are not only places of worship, but a living testimony of our uninterrupted presence here politically, spiritually and intellectually. Let us make no mistake about the importance and reverence we Christians and Muslims attach to Jerusalem.

Let me tell you, without the slightest hesitation, that I did not come to you under this dome to make a request that your troops evacuate the occupied territories. Complete withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 is a logical and undisputed fact. Nobody should plead for that. Any talk about permanent peace based on justice, and any move to ensure our coexistence in peace and security in this part of the world, would become meaningless, while you occupy Arab territories by force of arms. For there is no peace that could be in consonance with, or be built on, the occupation of the land of others. Otherwise, it would not be a serious peace.

Yes, this is a foregone conclusion which is not open to discussion or debate — if intentions are sincere and if endeavours to establish a just and durable peace for ours and the generations to come are genuine.

As for the Palestinians cause, nobody could deny that it is the crux of the entire problem. Nobody in the world could accept, today, slogans propagated here in Israel, ignoring the existence of the Palestinian People, and questioning their whereabouts. The cause of the Palestinian People and their legitimate rights are no longer ignored or denied today by anybody. Rather, nobody who has the ability of judgement can deny or ignore it.

It is an acknowledged fact received by the world community, both in the East and in the West, with support and recognition in international documents and official statements. It is of no use to anybody to turn deaf ears to its resounding voice which is being heard day and night, or to overlook its historical reality. Even the United States, your first ally which is absolutely committed to safeguard Israel's security and existence, and which offered and still offers Israel every moral, material and military support — I say — even the United States has opted to face up to reality and facts, and admit that the Palestinian People are entitled to legitimate rights and that the Palestinian problem is the core and essence of the conflict and that, so long as it continues to be unresolved, the conflict will continue to aggravate, reaching new dimensions. In all sincerity, I tell you that there can be no peace without the Palestinians. It is a grave error of unpredictable consequences to overlook or brush aside this cause.

I shall not indulge in past events since the Balfour Declaration sixty years ago. You are well acquainted with the relevant facts. If you have found the legal and moral justification to set up a national home on a land that did not all belong to you, it is incumbent upon you to show understanding of the insistence of the People of Palestine on establishing, once again (*sic*) a state on their land. When some extremists ask the Palestinians to give up this sublime objective, this, in fact, means asking them to renounce their identity and every hope for the future.

I hail the Israeli voices that called for the recognition of the Palestinian People's rights to achieve and safeguard peace. Here I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that it is no use to refrain from recognizing the Palestinian People and their rights to statehood and rights of return.

We, the Arabs, have faced this experience before, with you and with the reality of Israeli existence. The struggle took us from war to war, from victims to more victims, until you and we have today reached the edge of a horrifying abyss and a terrifying disaster, unless, together, we seize the opportunity, today, of a durable peace based on justice.

You have to face reality bravely as I have done. There can never be any solution to a problem by evading it or turning a deaf ear to it. Peace cannot last if attempts are made to impose fantasy concepts on which the world has turned its back and announced its unanimous call for the respect of rights and facts. There is no need to enter a vicious circle as to Palestinian rights. It is useless to create obstacles. Otherwise the march of peace will be impeded or peace will be blown up.

As I have told you, there is no happiness to the detriment of others. Direct confrontation and straight-forwardness are the short-cut and the most successful way to reach a clear objective. Direct confrontation concerning the Palestinian problem, and tackling it in one single language with a view to achieving a durable and just peace, lie in the establishment of their state. With all the guarantees you demand, there should be no fear of a newlyborn state that needs the assistance of all countries of the world. When the bells of peace ring, there will be no hands to beat the drums of war. Even if they existed, they would be soundless.

Conceive with me a peace agreement in Geneva that we would herald to a world thirsty for peace, a peace agreement based on the following points:

First: ending the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories occupied in 1967.

Second: achievement of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian People and their right to self-determination, including their right to establish their own state.

Third: the right of all states in the area to live in peace within their boundaries, which will be secure and guaranteed through procedures to be agreed upon, which provide appropriate security to international boundaries, in addition to appropriate international guarantees.

Fourth: commitment of all states in the region to administer the relations among them in accordance with the objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly the principles concerning the non-resort to force and the solution of differences among them by peaceful means.

Fifth: ending the state of belligerency in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen, peace is not the mere endorsement of written lines; rather, it is a rewriting of history. Peace is not a game of calling for peace to defend certain whims or hide certain ambitions. Peace is a giant struggle against all and every ambition and whim. Perhaps the examples taken from ancient and modern history teach us all that missiles, warships and nuclear weapons cannot establish security. Rather, they destroy what peace and security build. For the sake of our peoples, and for the sake of the civilizations made by man, we have to defend man everywhere against the rule of the force of arms, so that we may endow the rule of humanity with all the power of the values and principles that promote the sublime position of Mankind.

Allow me to address my call from this rostrum to the People of Israel. I address myself with true and sincere words to every man, woman and child in Israel.

From the Egyptian People who bless this sacred mission of peace, I convey to you the message of peace, the message of the Egyptian People who do not know fanaticism, and whose sons, Muslims, Christians, and Jews, live together in a spirit of cordiality, love and tolerance. This is Egypt whose people have entrusted me with that sacred message, the message of security, safety and peace. To every man, woman and child in Israel, I say: encourage your leadership to struggle for peace. Let all endeavours be channelled towards building a huge edifice for peace, instead of strongholds and hideouts defended by destructive rockets. Introduce to the entire world the image of the new man in this area, so that he

might set an example to the man of our age, the man of peace everywhere.

Be the heralds to your sons. Tell them that past wars were the last of wars and the end of sorrows. Tell them that we are in for a new beginning to a new life — the life of love, prosperity, freedom and peace.

You, bewailing mother; you, widowed wife; you, the son who lost a brother or a father; you, all victims of wars — fill the earth and space with recitals of peace. Fill bosoms and hearts with the aspirations of peace. Turn the song into a reality that blossoms and lives. Make hope a code of conduct and endeavour. The will of peoples is part of the will of God.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I came to this place, with every beat of my heart and with every sentiment, I prayed to God Almighty, while performing the Curban Bairam prayers, and while visiting the Holy Sepulchre, to give me strength and to confirm my belief that this visit may achieve the objectives I look forward to, for a happy present and a happier future.

I have chosen to set aside all precedents and traditions known by warring countries, in spite of the fact that occupation of the Arab territories is still there. Rather, the declaration of my readiness to proceed to Israel came as a great surprise that stirred many feelings and astounded many minds. Some opinions even doubted its intent. Despite that, the decision was inspired by all the clarity and purity of belief, and with all the true expression of my People's will and intentions.

And I have chosen this difficult road which is considered, in the opinion of many, the most difficult road. I have chosen to come to you with an open heart and an open mind. I have chosen to give this great impetus to all international efforts exerted for peace. I have chosen to present to you, and in your own home, the realities devoid of any schemes or whims, not to manoeuvre or to win a round, but for us to win together, the most dangerous of rounds and battles in modern history — the battle of permanent peace based on justice.

It is not my battle alone, nor is it the battle of the leadership in Israel alone. It is the battle of all and every citizen in all our territories whose right it is to live in peace. It is the commitment of conscience and responsibility in the hearts of millions.

When I put forward this initiative, many asked what is it that I conceived as possible to achieve during this visit, and what my expectations were. And, as I answered the questioners, I announce before you that I have not thought of carrying out this initiative from the concept of what could be achieved during this visit, but I have come here to deliver a message. I have delivered the message, and may God be my witness.

I repeat with Zechariah, *"Love right and justice."*

I quote the following verses from the holy Koran:

*"We believe in God and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes and in the books given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets from their lord. We make no distinction between one and another among them and to God we submit."*

#### 74. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin, 20 November 1977.

*Following Sadat's address to the Knesset, in which he called for an end of Israeli occupation, withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, the establishment of a Palestinian state and the end to war, Prime Minister Begin rose to speak for Israel. He emphasized Israel's willingness to enter into negotiations on all issues without any conditions. Mr. Begin said that Israel was prepared to negotiate in various forms, direct talks in Jerusalem or Cairo, a Geneva Peace Conference or on neutral ground. Text:*

Mr. Speaker, Honourable President of the State of Israel, Honourable President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Worthy and Learned Knesset Members:

We send our greetings to the President and to all adherents of the Islamic faith, in our own country and wherever they may be, on the occasion of the Feast of Sacrifice, Id el-Adha.

This feast reminds us of the binding of Isaac on the altar, the test with which the Creator tried the faith of our forefather Abraham — our common father; the challenge which Abraham met. But, from the point of view of morality and the advancement of Mankind, this event heralded the principle of a ban on human sacrifice. Our two Peoples, in their ancient tradition, learned and taught that humanitarian prohibition, while the nations around us continued to offer human sacrifices to their idols. Thus we, the People of Israel and the Arab People, contributed to the advancement of Mankind, and we continue to contribute to human civilization until this very day.

I greet the President of Egypt on the occasion of his visit to our country and his participation in this session of the Knesset. The duration of the flight from Cairo to Jerusalem is short but, until last night, the distance between them was infinite. President Sadat showed courage in crossing this distance. We Jews can appreciate courage, as exhibited by our guest, because it is with courage that we arose, and with it we shall continue to exist.

Mr. Speaker, this small People, the surviving remnant of the Jewish People which returned to our historic Homeland, always sought peace. And, when the dawn of our freedom rose on the 14th of May, 1948, the 4th of Iyar, 5708, David Ben-Gurion said, in the Declaration of Independence, the charter of our national independence:

*"We extend our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish People settled in its own Land."*

A year earlier, in the midst of the fateful struggle for the liberation of the Land and the redemption of the Nation, while still in the underground, we issued the following call to our neighbours:

*"Let us live together in this Land and together advance towards a life of freedom and happiness. Our Arab neighbours — do not reject the hand which is outstretched to you in peace."*

But it is my duty — my duty Mr. Speaker, and not only my privilege — to assert to-day in truth that our hand, extended in peace, was rejected. And, one day after our in-

dependence was renewed, in accordance with our eternal and indisputable right, we were attacked on three fronts, and we stood virtually without arms — few against many, weak against strong. One day after the declaration of our independence, an attempt was made to strangle it with enmity, and to extinguish the last hope of the Jewish People in the generation of Holocaust and Resurrection.

No, we do not believe in might, and we have never based our relations with the Arab Nation on force. On the contrary, force was exercised against us. Throughout all the years of this generation we have never ceased to be attacked with brute force in order to destroy our Nation, to demolish our independence, to annul our right. And we defended ourselves.

True, we defended our right, our existence, our honour, our women and our children against recurrent attempts to crush us by brute force, and not on one front alone. This, too, is true: with the help of God we overcame the forces of aggression and assured the survival of our nation, not only for this generation, but for all those to come.

We do not believe in might; we believe in right, only in right. And that is why our aspiration, from the depths of our hearts, from time immemorial until this very day, is peace.

Mr. President, in this democratic chamber sit commanders of all the Hebrew underground fighting organizations. They were compelled to conduct a battle of few against many, against a mighty world power. Here sit our top military commanders, who led their forces in a battle that was imposed on them, and to a victory that was inevitable, because they defended right. They belong to various parties, and have different outlooks. But I am sure, Mr. President, that I am expressing the views of them all, without exception, when I say that we have one aspiration at heart, one desire in our souls, and we are all united in this aspiration and this desire — to bring peace: peace to our nation which has not known it for even one day since the beginning of the Return to Zion; and peace to our neighbours to whom we wish all the best. And we believe that if we achieve peace, true peace, we shall be able to assist one another in all realms of life, and a new era will be opened in the Middle East: an era of flourishing and growth, of development and progress and advancement, as in ancient times.

Therefore, allow me today to define the meaning of peace as we understand it. We seek a true, full peace, with absolute reconciliation between the Jewish People and the Arab People. We must not permit memories of the past to stand in our way. There have been wars; blood has been shed; our wonderful sons have fallen in battle on both sides. We shall always cherish the memory of our heroes who gave their lives so that this day, yea even this day, might come. We respect the valour of an adversary, and we pay tribute to all members of the young generation of the Arab Nation who have fallen as well.

Let us not be daunted by memories of the past, even if they are bitter to us all. We must overcome them, and focus on what lies ahead: on our Peoples, on our children, on our common future. For, in this region, we shall all live together — the Great Arab Nation in its States and its countries, and the Jewish People in its Land, Eretz Israel — forever and ever. For this reason the meaning of peace must be defined.

As free men, Mr. President, let us conduct negotiations for a peace treaty and, with the help of God, so we believe with all our hearts, the day will come when we will sign it, with mutual respect. Then will we know that the era of wars has ended, that we have extended a hand to one another, that we have shaken each other's hand, and that the future will be glorious for all the Peoples of the region. Of prime significance, therefore, in the context of a peace treaty, is a termination of the state of war.



I agree, Mr. President, that you have not come here and we did not invite you to our country in order, as has been suggested in recent days, to drive a wedge between the Arab Peoples, or, expressed more cleverly in accord with the ancient saying, "*divide et impera*." Israel has no desire to rule and does not wish to divide. We want peace with all our neighbours — with Egypt and with Jordan, with Syria and with Lebanon.

There is no need to differentiate between a peace treaty and the termination of the state of war. We neither propose this, nor do we seek it. On the contrary, the first article of a peace treaty determines the end of the state of war, forever. We wish to establish normal relations between us, as exist among all nations after all wars. We have learned from history, Mr. President, that war is avoidable. It is peace that is inevitable.

Many nations have waged war against one another, and sometimes they have made use of the foolish term "eternal enemy." There are no eternal enemies. After all wars comes the inevitable — peace. Therefore, in the context of a peace treaty, we seek to stipulate the establishment of diplomatic relations, as is customary among civilized nations.

Today, Jerusalem is bedecked with two flags — the Egyptian and the Israeli. Together, Mr. President, we have seen our little children waving both flags. Let us sign a peace treaty and establish such a situation forever, both in Jerusalem and in Cairo. I hope the day will come when Egyptian children will wave Israeli and Egyptian flags together, just as the Israeli children are waving both of these flags together in Jerusalem; when you, Mr. President, will be represented by a loyal Ambassador in Jerusalem, and we, by an Ambassador in Cairo and, should differences of opinion arise between us, we will clarify them, like civilized peoples, through our authorized emissaries.

We propose economic cooperation for the development of our countries. God created marvelous lands in the Middle East — virtual oases in the desert — but there are also deserts, and these can be made fertile. Let us join hands in facing this challenge, and cooperate in developing our countries, in abolishing poverty, hunger and homelessness. Let us raise our nations to the status of developed countries, so that we may no longer be called developing states.

With all due respect, I am prepared to endorse the words of His Highness, the King of Morocco, who said, publicly, that, if peace were to be established in the Middle East, the combination of Arab and Jewish genius can together convert the region into a paradise on earth.

Let us open our countries to free movement, so that you shall come to us and we will visit you. I am prepared today to announce, Mr. Speaker, that our country is open to the citizens of Egypt, and I do not qualify this announcement with any condition on our part. I think it would be only be proper and just that there be a mutual announcement on this matter. And, just as Egyptian flags are flying in our streets, there is also an honoured Egyptian delegation in our capital and in our country today. Let there be many visitors. Our border will be open to you, just as will be all the other borders, for, as I noted, we would like the same situation to prevail in the south, in the north and in the east.

Therefore, I renew my invitation to the President of Syria to follow in your footsteps, Mr. President, and to come to our country to begin negotiations on the establishment of peace between Israel and Syria and on the signing of a peace treaty between us. I am sorry to say, there is no justification for the mourning that has been decreed on the other side of our northern border. On the contrary, such visits, such contacts and discussions, can and should be a cause of happiness, a cause of elation for all peoples.

I invite King Hussein to come here and we shall discuss with him all the problems that exist between us. I also invite genuine spokesmen of the Palestinian Arabs to come and to hold talks with us on our common future, on guaranteeing human freedom, social justice, peace and mutual respect.

And, if they should invite us to come to their capitals, we shall respond to their invitation. Should they invite us to begin negotiations in Damascus, Amman or Beirut, we shall go to those capitals in order to negotiate there. We do not wish to divide. We seek true peace with all our neighbours, to be expressed in peace treaties, the context of which shall be as I have already clarified.

Mr. Speaker, it is my duty today to tell our guests and all the nations who are watching us and listening to our words about the bond between our People and this Land. The President mentioned the Balfour Declaration. No, sir, we took no foreign land. We returned to our Homeland. The bond between our People and this Land is eternal. It was created at the dawn of human history. It was never severed. In this Land we established our civilization; here our prophets spoke those holy words you cited this very day; here the Kings of Judah and Israel prostrated themselves; here we became a nation; here we established our Kingdom and, when we were exiled from our country by the force that was exercised against us, even when we were far away, we did not forget this Land, not even for a single day. We prayed for it; we longed for it; we have believed in our return to it ever since the day these words were spoken:

*"When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with joyful shouting."*

That song applies to all our exiles, to all our sufferings, and to the consolation that the Return to Zion would surely come.

This, our right, has been recognized. The Balfour Declaration was included in the Mandate which was recognized by the nations of the world, including the United States of America. And the preamble to that authoritative international document states:

*"Whereas recognition has thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish People with Palestine (or, in Hebrew, 'Eretz Israel') and to the grounds for reconstituting their National Home in that country (that is, in 'Eretz Israel')..."*

In 1919, we also gained recognition of this right from the spokesman of the Arab People. The agreement of 3 January 1919, signed by Emir Feisal and Chaim Weizmann, states:

*"Mindful of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish People, and realizing that the surest means of working out the consummation of their national aspirations is through the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and of Palestine..."*

Afterwards, follow all the articles on cooperation between the Arab State and Eretz Israel. That is our right; its fulfilment — the truth.

What happened to us when our Homeland was taken from us? I accompanied you this morning, Mr. President, to Yad Vashem. With your own eyes you saw what the fate of our

People was when this Homeland was taken from it. It is an incredible story. We both agreed, Mr. President, that whoever has not himself seen what is found in Yad Vashem cannot understand what befell this People when it was homeless, robbed of its own Homeland. And we both read a document dtd 30 January 1939, in which the world "*vernichtung*" appears — "if war breaks out the Jewish race in Europe will be annihilated." Then, too, we were told to pay no heed to such words. The whole world heard. No one came to our rescue; not during the nine critical, fateful months following this announcement — the likes of which had never been heard since God created man and man created Satan — and not during those six years when millions of our people, among them a million and a half small Jewish children were slaughtered in every possible way.

No one came to our rescue, not from the East and not from the West. And therefore we, this entire generation, the generation of Holocaust and Resurrection, swore an oath of allegiance: never again shall we endanger our People; never again will our wives and our children — whom it is our duty to defend, if need be even at the cost of our own lives — be put in the devastating range of enemy fire.

And further: ever since then it has been, and will continue to be, our duty, for generations to come, to remember that certain things said about our People are to be related to with all seriousness. We must not, Heaven forbid, for the future of our People, accept any advice suggesting that we not take such words seriously.

President Sadat knows, as he knew from us before he came to Jerusalem, that our position concerning permanent borders between us and our neighbours differs from his. However, I call upon the President of Egypt and upon all our neighbours: do not rule out negotiations on any subject whatsoever. I propose, in the name of the overwhelming majority of this Parliament, that everything will be negotiable. Anybody who says that, in the relationship between the Arab People — or the Arab Nations in the area — and the State of Israel there are subjects that should be excluded from negotiations, is assuming an awesome responsibility. Everything is negotiable. No side shall say the contrary. No side shall present prior conditions. We will conduct the negotiations with respect.

If there are differences of opinion between us, that is not exceptional. Anyone who has studied the history of wars and the annals of peace treaties knows that all negotiations for peace treaties have begun with differences of opinion between the parties concerned, and that, in the course of the negotiations, they have reached solutions which have made possible the signing of agreements or peace treaties. That is the path we propose to follow.

We shall conduct the negotiations as equals. There are no vanquished and there are no victors. All the Peoples of the region are equal, and all will relate to each other with respect. In this spirit of openness, of readiness of each to listen to the other — to facts, reasons, explanations — with every reasonable attempt at mutual persuasion — let us conduct the negotiations as I have asked and propose to open them, to conduct them, to continue them persistently until we succeed, in good time, in signing a peace treaty between us.

We are prepared, not only, to sit with representatives of Egypt and with representatives of Jordan, Syria and Lebanon — if it so desires — at a Peace Conference in Geneva. We proposed that the Geneva Conference be renewed on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 of the Security Council. However, should problems arise between us prior to the convening of the Geneva Conference, we will clarify them today and tomorrow and, if the President of Egypt will be interested in continuing to clarify them in Cairo — all the better; if on neutral ground — no opposition. Anywhere. Let us clarify — even before the Geneva Conference convenes — the problems that should be made clear before it meets, with open

eyes and a readiness to listen to all suggestions.

Allow me to say a word about Jerusalem. Mr. President, today you prayed in a house of worship sacred to the Islamic faith, and from there you went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. You witnessed the fact, known to all who come from throughout the world, that, ever since this city was joined together, there is absolutely free access, without any interference or obstacle, for the members of all religions to their holy places. This positive phenomenon did not exist for 19 years. It has existed now for about 11 years, and we can assure the Moslem world and the Christian world — all the nations — that there will always be free access to the holy places of every faith. We shall defend this right of free access, for it is something in which we believe — in the equality of rights for every man and every citizen, and in respect for every faith.

Mr. Speaker, this is a special day for our Parliament, and it will undoubtedly be remembered for many years in the annals of our Nation, in the history of the Egyptian People, and perhaps, also, in the history of nations. And on this day, with your permission, worthy and learned Members of the Knesset, I wish to offer a prayer that the God of our common ancestors will grant us the requisite wisdom of heart in order to overcome the difficulties and obstacles, the calumnies and slanders. With the help of God, may we arrive at the longed-for day for which all our people pray — the day of peace.

For indeed, as the Psalmist of Israel said, "*Righteousness and peace have kissed*," and, as the prophet Zecharia said, "*Love truth and peace*."

#### **75. Statement to the Knesset by Labour Party Chairman Peres, 20 November 1977.**

*Mr. Peres focused his remarks on the many elements that united the people of Israel, chief among them the quest for peace. Even though, he as leader of the opposition in the Knesset, did not always see eye to eye with the government, there were certain issues on which all Israelis stood as one. He stated that while he did not agree with the demands contained in the Sadat speech, he felt that many problems could be resolved in the context of negotiations. Text:*

Mr. Speaker, Honourable President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Honourable President of the State of Israel, Members of the Knesset:

I do not speak today in the name of the Opposition, but, rather, in the name of that which unites our People — for, among our People, there is no opposition to peace. Even though we may differ in our conception of the nature of the settlement which is both possible and desirable, there are no differences of opinion among us concerning the urgent need for a peace settlement.

Our Nation is united, Mr. President, as you were undoubtedly able to sense in all of your contacts, in its desire for peace — at long last a total peace, true peace. We are also united in welcoming you to Jerusalem, the city of faith and peace, the city of hope and prayer.

Your coming is seen by us as an innovation, the act of a far-sighted leader. We see the Head of Egypt, the representative of a long and glorious history, marking out a new path for the Arabs and, most of all, an act that must not be squandered in vain.

You have revealed courage in taking the risk of overturning old habits and rigid patterns for a new start and a renewed beginning. In war, too, risks are taken, but their prospects are always bitter. War may have its victors, but they, too, pay a heavy price. And, while the courage required for peace may involve losses, it surely does not involve the loss of life.

Your coming symbolizes such a new beginning. I assure you that we will all try to free ourselves from preconceived notions, in order that we may see things in a new light and against a new background. We will support every step that the Government of Israel takes for the sake of a peace settlement, and we will continue to contribute whatever is within our power to ensure that your visit here will be a true success for our Peoples, for peace.

Mr. President. I listened very attentively to your words. I was not able to agree with their content; not concerning peace — our understanding of peace is different — and not concerning the terms of the settlement. But every negotiation begins with disagreement. We will listen to you, and you will listen to us. It is possible to arrive at a compromise between our two positions, or at a third path which neither you nor we had imagined. It is for this reason that we attribute such great importance to these talks from this rostrum.

As you stand here, on the rostrum of our Knesset, together with the Prime Minister of Israel and before the elected representatives of our State with its Jewish, Moslem, Christian and Druse inhabitants, we feel that a breath-taking moment of opportunity has presented itself in the thrust of history, as hundreds of millions of peace-seeking people watch us and follow every single minute of this visit.

The eyes of millions of onlookers and of thousands of years of history — both Egyptian history and Jewish history — are focused on this rostrum. We both represent histories which are among the most ancient of the human race; histories that have known confrontation and cooperation, histories drenched in suffering and histories that have known hope. From the peaks of man's most well-known structures — the pyramids — and from the pages of the oldest of man's writings — the Bible — a piercing question beckons our reply: will we have the wisdom to elevate ourselves to the true virtues among life's aspirations, and to free ourselves from the distress of war so that we may enter the expanse of peace, as we have freed ourselves from the yoke of slavery to reach the crest of freedom?

Not only does a distant past bind us, but also a great future. At this very moment, the anxious eyes of millions of Egyptian, Syrian, Jordanian, Palestinian and Jewish mothers are focused on this rostrum in the hope that they may hear us proclaim to them — to them and to their sons — that there will be no more wars, no more threats, no more bereavement, destruction, refugees, and that, from now on, the youth of our nations will have the opportunity of growing up in an atmosphere free of fear, hatred, and disastrous surprise. All are awaiting the tidings that, at long last, wisdom has vanquished enmity, and political art has surpassed military doctrine.

Your very coming has accomplished part of this task. We are here together, speaking to one another and, even without resolving the differences of opinion between us, your coming has created an opportunity that did not exist previously. And, if we will succeed in devoting to the issues of peace even part of the energies which we have devoted until now to military issues, then your visit will be remembered forever as the beginning we have all awaited.

Members of the Knesset, for thirty years we have awaited this moment, this visit. We have always believed that face-to-face meeting between the leaders of our Nations would present the conditions for fruitful talks and for a momentum that would bring peace;

peace, Mr. President, not only between the upper echelons of our societies, but also at the grass roots level — between statesmen, poets, workers, academicians — between children and adults, among all of us — in life, in books and in work.

The Prime Minister spoke of it. Every Prime Minister who preceded him spoke in support of this approach. David Ben-Gurion said:

*"There is no conflict between us and the Egyptian People; we do not want the anarchy in our relations with Egypt to persist, and we are prepared to negotiate for a stable peace, cooperation and neighbourly relations, providing that there be direct negotiations without any preconditions, without coercion from any side."*

Sharett and Eshkol repeated the hope that it would be possible:

*"...to renew the glorious days in which Jews and Arabs together contributed to human civilization."*

And, may she be blessed with many more years among us, Mrs. Meir said:

*"I appeal to the President of Egypt as to the President of a great People, with the proposal that we meet as equals and make a common and supreme effort to arrive at a solution to all the outstanding problems between us."*

And Mr. Yitzhak Rabin declared:

*"I announce my readiness to meet with any Arab Head of Government at any time, in any place, for peace talks."*

Since 1973, we have found solutions which none of us had expected in advance. With the mediation of our friends the Americans, we agreed to sign, as you mentioned, two settlements: the interim settlement of 1974 and the settlement toward a settlement of 1975. These settlements were both criticized in their time. It was argued that Israel was making tangible concessions — a retreat from territories which seemed vital to her; whereas Egypt and Syria were making concessions which were fundamentally political — an assurance of calm in the area, a rehabilitation of certain regions, an intangible commitment to advance toward peace.

We could not have signed these agreements had we not chosen to believe that, indeed, Egypt — the President of Egypt and the Egyptian People — basically sought peace.

Peace can only be achieved if negotiation attempts are given an honest chance. Patience is also required, and let us not forget that. The expectations of many citizens in both States must be answered. We must compromise, somewhat, in terms of both the price of security and the danger of war, for the sake of the exaltation of man, the improvement of society, the development of agriculture, the expansion of industry, the progress of science and the raising of the standard of living of every citizen.

We have preferred, just as you have preferred, the proposals of the United States, as these were carried back and forth in the shuttle plane, to the threatening involvement of the Soviet Union, which could have contributed to peace, but chose to contribute to war.

Your coming here renders yesterday's procedures and modes of discussion inadequate and outdated. And the assurance that everything is negotiable accords your visit substantial, powerful and immediate importance. Our readiness to discuss your proposals in good faith brings the prospect of finding appropriate solutions closer to fruition. Each of us will voice his views, and we will together search for a fair compromise.

I speak in the name of the Israel Labour Movement — a movement which, from its inception until this very day, has never ceased to believe in peace, in good human relations among workers on the home front, as well as among the Peoples of the region. I am convinced that the socialist movements in the world and, among them, certainly also the Egyptian Socialist Union, represent not only the professional or upper classes, but also popular movements, which believe that welfare of the worker can only be safeguarded by a high moral standard in his society. And neither are they only national movements, but universal in outlook. They champion a humane and democratic socialism that has sworn to liberate man from coercion, from exploitation and discrimination; to free the nations from subservience and enmity. All efforts must be in accord with that aim — the dignity of man, the justness of his society, world peace.

From this rostrum we must tell one another, without circuitousness or deceit, what are the actual steps we now must take for the sake of peace. In addition to each of us voicing his view, and without disqualifying any method and any means that might lead to peace — whether it be a gradual or a step-by step approach, with one country at a time or with a number of countries together, or in one large comprehensive step — the goal must be permanent peace, total peace with all and among all with Ambassadors, with diplomatic, economic and commercial relations, as is customary among nations living together in a region.

Such peace must be based on direct relations between the Arab Peoples and the Jewish People, without any external buffers, without dependence on foreigners, without partitions imported from abroad. We must relate to each other as neighbours, as one citizen living alongside his fellow, similar to the pattern existing among the European Nations as, for example, among the Scandinavian countries which knew prolonged enmity, yet have arrived at a high level of cooperation without obscuring their separate identities.

Each and every Nation, Mr. President, will determine its own rights and will be free to express its own identity — to pray to its God, to educate its children in the spirit of its heritage, to express its opinion, to move freely, to maintain contact with other members of its People, to honour human equality, to respect the differences among collectivities of people, to refrain from turning equality into privilege and difference into violence.

There is no escaping the fact that peace must be based on mutual compromise, in contrast to war, which is built on a one-sided decision. We will support a true and honourable compromise, and will not demand that any side compromise its ability to defend itself.

We have announced that we are prepared for territorial compromise with every one of the Arab States, so long as this does not endanger our security, just as our neighbours would not want their security threatened. What we shall gain in the realm of peace, we shall all be able to save in the realm of security. This is important, for we do not seek the involvement of foreign forces in our region. We have rejected such forces in difficult times for us, and we do not seek them in a period in which — as I believe — the chances for peace have increased.

Peace must create recognized and permanent boundaries; it must also bring a solution to the refugee problem — and there are refugees on both sides. About a third of Israel's in-

habitants came from Arab countries. They are not refugees; they are citizens in every respect. About half of the Palestinians live in the area between the Jordan and the Mediterranean — most are citizens; some are refugees. With joint efforts, we can elevate them all to a new standard of living, to a new life in which there no longer are refugees, or refugee status, but all are citizens living a normal life in every way.

We are prepared to advance towards peace by virtue of any agreed settlement — with each State separately or with all the neighbouring States at the same time. We acknowledge Egypt's senior status and leadership role in the Arab world and throughout the region, and peace can ultimately be based on a progressive union among the nations of the region, and not cast as a wedge separating them. The types of alliance which gave birth to enmity must be exchanged for a new unity that will give rise to peace.

As far as can be seen, Mr. President, there is no justification, no shadow of a reason, to maintain any conflict whatsoever between us and Egypt. We are convinced that it is within our power to settle outstanding points of dispute, and what appear to be points of dispute, within a reasonable period of time. The enmity between us was a prolonged error; the settlement between us is within reach.

There is no basis for any conflict between us and Jordan. We have experienced the taste of Jordanian shells, but we have also experienced the taste of the Open Bridges. We regret those shells, but we are also certain that orderly peace journey on the Open Bridges can pass without mishap.

We are prepared to conduct negotiations for a permanent peace with the Syrians. It is also possible to arrive at a speedy peace settlement with Lebanon.

Nor do we deny the existence of a Palestinian identity. Every People can decide on its own identity, and this is not subject to the approval of any other People. But, whatever expression of the Palestinian identity may be found, it must not endanger the security of Israel — I might add, or of Jordan, though that is not my business — and the world has already seen how enlightened nations have solved the problem of different identities dwelling together, plowing adjoining parcels of land, without bitterness, through coexistence in peace, each with its own leadership directing its affairs in responsible, stable, political frameworks.

In dealing with the holy places, economic needs and matters of security, maximal open-mindedness is required. No border must prevent access to the holy places, and no political map can be allowed to disrupt economic interchange, just as no security requirement can be permitted to interfere in the spiritual heritage of everyone among our Peoples.

The peace negotiations can be conducted in any place, at any time, in any form. They can be conducted in Geneva, in Cairo or in Jerusalem. They can be open or secret; they can be completely direct or can involve the participation of certain designated states; they can be intensive or gradual; but the one thing that must not happen — they must not fail.

Mr. President, we are very proud of our achievements in Israel. History was gracious to the Egyptian People, and they were not exiled from their land. History was cruel to us, and we knew dispersion and calumny and Holocaust. We maintained ourselves by the power of prayer, by our longing and our love of Zion. Today you are an exalted and esteemed guest on the soil of our Resurrection.

We greatly respect the revival, indeed the revolution and great independence that you and the members of your generation have brought to the Egyptian People and to the Arab world.



The rebirth and the revival awakened hidden energies which we had thought had already become dissipated and latent over the long years. But much energy was also wasted in the friction of enmity between our two Peoples. Let us break this vicious circle, and reunite our forces, even as each of us remains faithful to his path, to his nationality and to his dream. Let us cooperate and together convert this area into the most fertile region in the world, and create a more affluent society than this region has ever known. In the words of the prophet Jeremiah, spoken 2500 years ago:

*"You shall not see sword, neither shall you have hunger, for true peace shall I give to you."*

You covered the distance from Ismailia to Lod in less than an hour. When you left, we did not know how we would meet. Now that you have arrived, however, it is already difficult to recall one such hour, during which, before the eyes of the entire world, the distance has withered away and the abyss has almost vanished. This is a beautiful hour in the lives of us all. We sense that this is a great hour that must become an hour of truth: We will have to forfeit things which are important to us, and you, Mr. President, will have to forfeit things which are important to you, if we are to meet on any common ground whatsoever, on which it is possible to build peace.

The long and bitter years of enmity ensnared us all. There is no issue between Israel and Egypt that is not solvable in peace discussions, and we shall all do what is necessary to ensure that your mission of peace — this dramatic, daring mission which we have long awaited — will, in the end, bear fruit, and that history will record this hour as the hour of a new beginning, an hour in which the count-down to peace began. Would that a fine hour common to all of us in the Middle East begin now. We will establish unity for peace, for peace unites us all.

## **76. Remarks by Mrs. Golda Meir to President Sadat in the Knesset, 21 November 1977.**

*On Monday morning, 21 November, President Sadat again drove to the Knesset for meetings with the various Israeli Knesset factions. The first to speak for the Labour Party was former Prime Minister Golda Meir who congratulated Sadat for having won the privilege of being the first Arab leader to come to Israel for the sake of the next generations to avoid war. Mrs. Meir praised Sadat for his courage and vision and expressed the hope that while many differences remain to be resolved, they will be done so in a spirit of mutual understanding. Text:*

Mr. President, I'm sure that from the moment your plane landed at Lydda Airport, and as you drove through the streets of Jerusalem, you must have felt, in all your encounters with the many people who turned out to meet you — the little children; the mothers with babies

in their arms; the old people; the people who were born in this country, the second, third, fourth and fifth generations, and those who have come recently — that all, without exception, were overjoyed to see you in our Land.

When asked, many years ago, when I thought that peace would come to this region — to our country and to our neighbouring countries — I said: I do not know the date, but I do know under what conditions it will come — when there will be a leader, a great leader of an Arab country. He will wake up one morning and feel sorry for his own people, for his own sons who have fallen in battle, and that day will be the beginning of peace between us.

Mr. President, we have a saying in Hebrew: "*zchut rishonim*." In English, this means "the privilege of being the first." I congratulate you, Mr. President, that you are privileged to be the first great Arab leader of the greatest country among our neighbours to come to us, with courage and determination, despite so many difficulties, for the sake of your sons, as well as for the sake of ours; for the sake of all mothers who mourn sons that fell in battle. No mother should have to give birth to a son in the fear that he may fall in battle. For the sake of all our sons and all our children, not only those who are alive today but also those to be born in future generations — you have come to us and said: let us have peace; let the war of 1973 be the last war between us.

You have come telling us that, from now on, you are prepared to live in peace with us. I can assure you, Mr. President, that as far as we are concerned, the desire for peace, the hope of peace and the dream of peace have never left the hearts of a single one of us. We have come back to this country to live in peace. We have come back to this country to live. We have come back to this country to create. In this room, you will see people who, for the first time in their lives, have climbed hills and planted trees in this country; who, for the first time, have gone down to the desert — it was considered a desert, a God-forsaken land — and have made it green, so that our children can live and play everywhere in it. Many of these children — very many of them — also enjoy the privilege of having been the first, after centuries upon centuries, to bring life to the desert, to the swamps and to the hills of this country. All this we have done for peace — to live in peace; to live, but to live in peace.

Mr. President, we listened to you last night and we heard your appeal for peace. When I was in office, and I am sure this was true for everyone who preceded me and for those who succeeded me in office — I hope that the day would come when we could meet with a leader of one of the Arab countries and hold a discussion with him. Not that we ever imagined that, at the very first meeting, we would come with pens in our hands, ready to sign a peace treaty. But our hope was that we would hold discussions on points of disagreement, and that we would discuss these points face-to-face, rather than through intermediaries for, no matter how successfully intermediaries may report to both of us, it is not the same. As I sit here and look at you, and as I heard you in person last night, it is not the same.

Of course, we must all realize that the path leading to peace may be a difficult one, but not as difficult as that path which leads to war. What Israel wants — what this group with which you are meeting today has wanted, from the very beginning, is territorial compromise, in accordance with the programme it adopted immediately after the war of 1967. As a matter of fact, Israel has made and accepted compromises ever since 1947. I can say, in all sincerity, that we have desired additional territory. We have always been prepared to live within our existing boundaries.

We will not go into history today, but what we want to tell you is that we were, and are, prepared for territorial compromise on all our borders — with one condition: these borders

will give us security, and protect us from danger, so that we will never be in need, God forbid, at any time, of help from abroad in order to defend ourselves. We have never sought such help from others; nobody has ever come to defend us. The blood that has been shed, to our sorrow, has been our own. We don't want to shed the blood of others.

With us today is Mr. Rabin. After the war of 1967, he was awarded an Honorary degree by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and, in his words of acceptance, as Chief of Staff, he said: *"Here is the Israeli army that came back victorious. It came back a sad army, despite its victory; sad because of our men who fell, but also because of our sons who were compelled to shoot others."* These two things we do not want: we do not want to be shot at — and, believe me — we do not want to shoot others.

Therefore, we want borders within which, when we do sign peace treaties, all Israelis will be assured that they live in security, without having to rely on international guarantees. I do not think we will need these when we have peace — neither we shall need them, nor you. But we must have borders that will enable us — if, God forbid, something should happen in the future — to defend ourselves. Territorial compromise — yes, but not compromise with our security! Each country, each nation, will decide its security requirements. When we talk of territorial compromise, it is essential that we remember this.

Mr. President. We, the People of Israel, are the last to be insensitive to the sorrow of others. We have never said that we want the Palestinian Arabs to remain as they are — in camps, in misery, dependent on charity. We do not wish to be dependent upon others, nor do we wish them to be dependent upon others. Had it been within our power, there would never have been a problem of this kind. Of course, we realize that there are Palestinian Arabs and we believe there is a solution, one that is both good for them and safe for us.

Because we believe this, we believe also that there is no connection between our opposition to another state between us and Jordan — a Palestinian state which would be small, probably not viable and perhaps forced to expand — and between our awareness of the need to solve the problem of the Palestinian Arabs. Our opposition to another state is based on Israel's most vital security requirements. Mr. President, should we agree to the establishment of such a state, there would be only ten miles between the Mediterranean and the borders of this state. You cannot expect us to feel secure within such borders.

Of course, we favour a solution for the Palestinian Arabs, and believe that in the programme of this group gathered here today with you, such a solution exists. This programme, formulated prior to the elections and still valid to this day, states that in our peace treaty with Jordan, there must be a solution for the Palestinian Arabs, so the camps may be wiped out and become a thing of the past. But not at the expense of Israel's security. If there were no solution, it would be a terrible problem for us. But there is a solution to this problem too.

Therefore, we say to you, Mr. President, that, while we do not agree with everything you said last night — surely, this does not surprise you — we deeply appreciate your call for peace, and believe in your sincere desire for it, just as I hope you believe in our sincere desire for it. Now, let us go forward. Even if we do not reach agreement on everything this morning, let us, at least, conclude one thing: the beginnings that you have made, with such courage and with such hope for peace, must go on, continuing face-to-face between ourselves and you, so that even an old lady like myself will live to see the day — yes, you always call me an old lady — and regardless of whoever signs on Israel's behalf, I want to live to see that day — that peace reigns between you and us, peace between ourselves and all our neighbours.

And, Mr. President, as a grandmother to a grandfather, may I give you a little present for your new grand-daughter, and thank you for the present you have given me.

**77. Joint press conference Begin-Sadat and text of agreed communique, 21 November 1977.**

*At the conclusion of the Sadat visit, a joint press conference given by Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat was held in Jerusalem. At the beginning of the conference, Mr. Begin read the agreed communique in which Israel and Egypt agreed to pursue the Sadat visit through a dialogue, leading to the signing of peace treaties in Geneva. President Sadat explained the reasons why Mr. Begin could not come to Cairo, but that the initiative he embarked on would be pursued. Mr. Begin said that he and Mr. Sadat agreed on the main principle of — no more war, no more bloodshed. Text of the communique and press conference:*

**Prime Minister Begin:** With the permission of the President, our noble guest, I will read to you, ladies and gentlemen, the text of the agreed communique issued at the conclusion of the visit to our country of President Sadat:

*"In response to the sincere and courageous move by President Sadat, and believing in the need to continue the dialogue along the lines proposed by both sides during their exchanges and the presentation of their positions in the historic meeting in Jerusalem, and in order to enhance the prospect of a fruitful consummation of this significant visit, the Government of Israel, expressing the will of the people of Israel, proposes that this hopeful step be further pursued through dialogue between the two countries concerned, thereby paving the way towards successful negotiations, leading to the signing of peace treaties in Geneva with all the neighbouring Arab states."*

Thank you for your attention, ladies and gentlemen.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, have you received an invitation to go to Cairo and, if so, when will you go?

**Mr. Begin:** We discussed this issue, with complete candour. I think that President Sadat would like to reciprocate. I would like to see Cairo, but I do understand the reasons why, at this stage, such an invitation was not issued. I would like to say, I do hope to visit Cairo, Mr. President.

**Q.** In addition to agreeing, in principle, that the dialogue between the two countries will continue, did the two of you, during the course of President Sadat's visit, work out specific, practical details for the continuation of this dialogue, even before the Geneva Peace Conference?

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, for sure, we had a big survey of all the problems that we are facing. We gave great importance to the convening of the Geneva Conference, but not more than this, the time was so short.

**Q.** I would also like Prime Minister Begin to respond to that question. How do you continue a dialogue without an Israeli Ambassador in Cairo and an Egyptian Ambassador in Jerusalem? How will you do it, practically?

**Mr. Begin:** The establishment of diplomatic relations usually goes together with the signing of peace treaties. In fact, sometimes the establishment of diplomatic relations does precede the signing of a peace treaty, as was the case between the Soviet Union and Japan, when, in Moscow, in October 1956, they signed a peace declaration which, though not a peace treaty, included the establishment of diplomatic relations. But, in our case, I suppose it will be logical to have diplomatic relations established as an integral part of the peace treaty which, in God's good time, we hope to sign.

**Q.** Mr. President, why aren't you inviting the Prime Minister of Israel to visit Cairo at this stage?

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, after I was invited here by the Prime Minister, and after I addressed the Knesset and the Israeli people through the Knesset, the Prime Minister has the full right to come and address our Parliament in Cairo. For certain reasons that we discussed together, we have found that we should postpone this issue for the future.

**Mr. Begin:** Mr. Kital, you heard from the President that I have a right, and we have only postponed the exercise of this right.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, in view of the political and physical risks that the President of Egypt took by coming to Israel, do you feel that you have gone far enough in giving him something that he can take back home?

**Mr. Begin:** We appreciate very much the courage of the President, in his decision to come from Cairo to Jerusalem. We did our best to make his stay enjoyable. I think he enjoyed his stay, and we had a frank discussion, both in public, from the rostrum of the Knesset, our Parliament, and in private. It is not a matter of a kind of compensation. What we wanted to achieve during this visit was to make sure that we started a serious direct dialogue about the ways to establish peace in the Middle East — not only between Egypt and Israel, but also between Israel and all the other neighbouring countries. I think we can say that we made progress on this issue, and the key word is "continuation". We agreed that we are going to continue our dialogue and, ultimately, out of it will come peace.

**Q.** Mr. President, my name is Abie Nathan. I am from The Voice of Peace — the peace ship that sailed into the Suez Canal, thanks to your permission, early this year. My question to you, sir, is: How did you get the idea, and who were the leaders around the world who encouraged you to take this bold initiative for peace, to help to bring our peoples together? And, when can I hope to come with an Israeli football team to Cairo to play against the Cairo eleven?

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, for the first part of the question — about this initiative and if I have already discussed it with any other leader — my answer is this: It started before I began my last trip to Romania, Iran and Saudi Arabia. I didn't discuss it with anyone except my Foreign Minister and, for sure, our Security Council in Egypt. The whole situation needed action, the peace process needed momentum again, and these are the motives behind this initiative.

**Q.** A common key question to President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin: After so many conversations, did you really reach an agreement on the meaning of the word

“security” concerning Israel and the neighbouring countries? The second question is directed to President Sadat: Arab hospitality is very well known all over the world. Did you feel a little bit embarrassed about the fact that you had to postpone the invitation of Mr. Begin to Cairo?

**Mr. Begin:** I am not embarrassed.

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, the first question about security — with the Premier and with the various parties in the Knesset today, we agreed upon the principle. Upon security we agree. But, on the meaning of security, we differ. I think that, through Geneva, we can reach an agreement, and let us hope that what I have said already today in the Knesset — let us hope that the two slogans that I want everyone to say are: “Let us have no war after October” and “Let us agree upon security.” I think those are the main issues.

For the second question, on hospitality — very sly — either I am an Arab and hospitable or not. No, as I said before, we have discussed this, Premier Begin and myself, and we have agreed together to postpone it for the time being.

**Mr. Begin:** I would like to add one remark. I would say to the questioner and all of you, ladies and Gentlemen, that, during the visit of President Sadat to our country and to Jerusalem, a momentous agreement has been achieved, already, namely: No more war, no more bloodshed, no more attacks, and collaboration in order to avoid any event which might lead to such tragic developments. When I addressed the Egyptian people directly, I said: Let us give a silent oath, one to another: No more war, no more bloodshed, no more threats. May I say that that mutual pledge was given in Jerusalem, and we are very grateful to President Sadat that he said so from the rostrum of the Knesset, personally to me, and today also to my colleagues in Parliament, both the supporters and the opponents of the government. It is a great moral achievement for our nations, for the Middle East and, indeed, for the whole world.

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, according to the joint communique, it is understood that the dialogue is going to be resumed. How is it going to be resumed, where, and will there be any place for the Palestinians to participate in this dialogue, now or later on in the Geneva Conference?

**Mr. Begin:** In the Geneva Conference the proper representation of Palestinian Arabs will take place. We agree on it. As far as the places in which the dialogue will continue, believe me, President Sadat and I know some geography.

**Q.** Mr. President, as you prepare to leave Israel, do you have a message for the people of Israel, with whom you are, after all, still at war?

**Mr. Sadat:** If I may say anything through you to the people of Israel, I must say this: That I am really deeply grateful for the very warm welcome and the marvelous sentiments that they have shown to me.

**Q.** Mr. President, I am Shmuel Segev from Ma'ariv. The Israeli government has allowed many Egyptian journalists to come and cover your visit. Will you now be prepared to open the doors of Egypt for Israeli journalists?

**Mr. Sadat:** When Mr. Begin visits us, for sure you will be coming.

**Q.** Not before?

**Mr. Begin:** Mr. Segev, “L'Hitra'ot Be'Kahir” (“See you in Cairo.”)

**Q.** I have two questions. First, after all your talks, are you now both convinced of the sincerity of the desire of each of you? The second question: Did you fix a date for the reconvening of the Geneva Conference?

**Mr. Sadat:** For the first question — yes. For the second question, we shall be working in the very near future for the convening of the Geneva Conference.

**Mr. Begin:** For the first question — yes, and we shall together work for the reconvening of the Geneva Conference.

**Q.** Mr. President, what psychological and what substantive progress have you made in Israel on your visit?

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, maybe you have heard me say before, that one of the main motives behind this visit to Israel was to give the peace process new momentum and to get rid of the psychological barrier that, in my opinion, was more than 70 percent of the whole conflict, the other 30 percent being substance. For the substance, as I told you, we have made a very big survey, but the time is too short to have progress in this way.

**Mr. Begin:** The time was so short that I think that, before I go to Cairo, I will have to invite President Sadat to Jerusalem for a second time.

**Q.** I have two questions for President Sadat. The first: After your meeting with the delegation of the Armed Services Committee of the US House of Representatives, you were quoted as saying: "The Soviet Union will for sure make difficulties for me and I am making my calculations so that this attitude should not create any obstacles at Geneva." Mr. President, was the Soviet Union, in the circumstances, blocking the road to Geneva?

**Mr. Sadat:** You must have heard of the communique that was issued by the Soviet Union and the United States for the convening of the Geneva Conference. What I told the committee you mentioned is this: That my relations with the Soviets are strained and it appears that whatever I do doesn't go to their liking at all. For instance, the visit here also, in their comments, doesn't go to their liking at all. I fear that the same attitude could be adopted in Geneva, and they are one of the co-sponsors. But, in the same answer, I said that, whenever the parties concerned reach an agreement, no-one, neither a big power nor a small power, can prevent us from fulfilling it, as much as we have agreed upon it.

**Q.** Egypt agreed to a joint venture with the black-listed US Ford Motor Company. Mr. Mohammed Mabruk, head of the Arab Boycott of Israel, attacked the Government of Egypt. Don't you think, Mr. President, that the time has come to put an end to the boycott?

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, I have an idea on this. I consider all these to be side issues. Let us try to solve the main issue, then all the side issues, automatically, will be solved.

**Q.** Mr. President, I thought it was significant that you went out of your way this morning to congratulate Mr. Peres on his speech. You called it constructive. Could you tell us what, precisely, in Mr. Peres' speech you found constructive?

**Mr. Sadat:** I said that, and said it in spite of the fact that we differ on several issues; don't forget that. I said: "...in spite of the fact that we differ on several issues," but his speech was still constructive.

**Q.** You repeated several times in the Knesset this morning that, whatever happens again between Egypt and Israel, the solutions must be sought not through war. Does this repeated statement cancel your previous repeated statements in Egypt that, if you cannot get back the territories by diplomatic means, you will get them back by force of war?

**Mr. Sadat:** For sure, I must tell you quite frankly that I am issuing this after I made my visit here and at the same time when we are preparing for Geneva. Well, after we had this new momentum and this new spirit, let us agree that, whatever happens between us, we should solve it together through talks rather than going to war. Because, as I told you, really, I was very deeply touched when I saw the children, the Israeli children, hailing me

here; the Israeli women. Really, I was very touched, and the same thing happens in Egypt also. Maybe you know that my people now are 100 percent behind me. They don't want any war. They want that we settle our differences on the table. But, mark this. I also said in the Knesset, and on this I differed with Premier Begin — he considered this as a condition — I said that the issue of the withdrawal from the occupied territories should not even be put on the table, except for the details of it, not as a principle. We differ on this. But when I made my statement, this is behind it. I mean this will be automatically, in Geneva, negotiated and decided.

**Q.** Mr. President, have you discussed today with the West Bank personalities the political future of the West Bank, and do you think they should participate in Geneva? When are you going to visit King Khalid?

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, for the first question, I received them. They were very kind to come and apologize for those who are abusing me in the outside world, from their patriots. I was very happy and elated when I prayed yesterday in Al Aqsa, and I met with our Arab citizens. I was very happy and elated regarding their representation. I should not say anything about this because the Palestinians should decide this for themselves.

About the visit to Saudi Arabia — whenever there is any issue, there are very close contacts together, and whenever there is any need to discuss anything, I may go at any time, or King Khalid may come to Cairo at any time. We do not have protocols and so on between us.

**Q.** Mr. President, now that you are more acquainted with the facts of the Nazi Holocaust, do you have a better insight into Israel's determination to maintain appropriate security positions against the extremist elements that are openly committed to the destruction of the Jewish state?

**Mr. Sadat:** Could you repeat the question?

**Q.** As above.

**Mr. Sadat:** As you have heard me say just now, security is one of the two main issues or two main slogans that should be raised now. I quite agree. I quite understand the point of view of security for the Israelis but, on the other hand, it shouldn't be through any compromise on land, because that would mean expansion. And, in my opinion, we shall discuss this thoroughly afterwards. A few kilometres here, or a few kilometres there, will not provide security. The intention is what provides security.

**Q.** Mr. President, you have faced very strong attacks from much of the rest of the Arab world for your visit here. You've even been faced with the threat of assassination for what you have done. What do you say to these people?

**Mr. Sadat:** I shall not be saying anything to those people. I think I shall be telling my people in Egypt what has happened here. I shall be giving a speech before the Parliament a few days after my arrival. I need not answer all those who have attacked me. Let me remind you that, after the disengagement agreement, for one continual year I was much more vehemently attacked than I am now.

**Q.** I have a question for both Prime Minister Begin and for President Sadat, and the premise is the same for both questions. Since there are 23 other Arab countries, with millions and millions of miles and plenty of money, and since Israel's territory is so small, by comparison, and since, as President Sadat just said, some of this land was not acquired by what he termed expansion, but was actually acquired by defensive war, after it was started, does Premier Begin believe that any of this land should be given up, in view of the biblical injunction not to surrender one inch of land acquired with the help of God?



And my question to President Sadat, would a larger demilitarised Sinai with joint development of the oil resources or the other resources of the area and with economic development and cooperation required to help his battered economy — wouldn't this and tourism be better for Egypt and for Israel than giving any of the land; or is vanity to win territory more important?

**Mr. Sadat:** Two words only for my answer — our land is sacred.

**Mr. Begin:** My friend, if you asked me a question about security...

**Q.** No, the question was about territory, not about security.

**Mr. Begin:** Will you please allow me to reply?

**Q.** O.K.

**Mr. Begin:** Thank you for your permission. I will explain now what security is to us: The lives of every man, woman and child. This is what national security means to us. We have long experience: In one generation we lost a third of our people and, in this country, 11 times we had to defend ourselves against repeated attempts to destroy us. With such an experience we will care for our people, for our women and children, as I said yesterday in Parliament. I think that we have almost a complete national consensus — with the exception of one party, the Communist Party, which is completely subservient to Moscow. This is the consensus by the overwhelming majority of our Parliament, whether in coalition or in opposition, and this is going to be our attitude during negotiations. Of course, I can respect a statement as was made just now by President Sadat: "Our land is sacred," and, because I respect it, I can say now: "Our land is sacred."

**Q.** Mr. Prime Minister, do you note a certain lack of symmetry in the fact that President Sadat is crossing a political canal and exposing himself to risks vis-a-vis his own people, while you stayed within the relative safety of Israeli official concept? In other words, while President Sadat came to Jerusalem and addressed himself to us, you came to Jerusalem and addressed yourself to us. Is this symmetry?

**Mr. Begin:** As I told you, my friend, I am ready to go to Cairo any day. And then, if to accept your statement, I will take that risk. So, if taking risks is a problem, both of us, I suppose, are prepared to take risks.

**Q.** Yesterday, in his speech, President Sadat spoke about the Palestinian problem being the crux of the Mid-East conflict. Israel, in his view, would have nothing to fear if a new state were established. No peace can be established without solving the problem. I should like to ask the Prime Minister, why did you not relate by so much as a word to what Mr. Sadat had to say?

**Mr. Begin:** I did, but I spoke in Hebrew. And I must correct you as I do always. Palestine is the name of a country, and in this country there are two nationalities. There are Palestinian Jews and Palestinian Arabs. When you say Palestinians, you do not explain the problem at issue. We do recognize the Arab nationality in our country, and therefore I always say: "Please, the question of the Palestinian Arabs." And in Hebrew I say "*Ha-ba'ayah shel Araviyei Eretz-Yisrael*," because in Hebrew, the name of this country is Eretz-Yisrael. Since the book of Samuel, and President Sadat knows the Bible perfectly well, no less than the Koran — so he knows the book of Samuel as well — where it is written for the first time: "And no locksmith shall be found throughout Eretz-Yisrael." The translation of Eretz-Yisrael is Palestine. I spoke about the Arabs of Eretz-Yisrael or, in other words, about Palestinian Arabs. It is an issue, and we have proposals to solve this issue.

**Q.** Mr. President, do you have any plans to meet with President Assad and persuade him maybe to join you?

**Mr. Sadat:** From time to time we do meet in the Arab world. I was asked in Damascus, before I came here, whether President Assad tried to put pressure on me not to complete this visit. I told them that no-one put pressure on the other. This is our way.

**Q.** The fact that you have come on this visit, is it really a breakthrough towards peace?

**Mr. Sadat:** We have always been speaking about and, indeed, the most important thing today is that we should go to Geneva. And that is what we have been talking about — going to Geneva.

**Q.** I come from Australia, which last week was a much shorter visit than yours from Cairo. May I ask you, since you have been here in the last 24 hours, do you feel closer to reconciling the just rights and needs of the Israeli people and the just rights and needs of the Palestinians?

**Mr. Sadat:** I am sure that the progress that we started through my visit here will enable us to solve all the problems. For example, we consider that there is an urgent problem of security. I also consider that the Palestinian state is very important. In spite of our differences upon this issue, we can decide in Geneva on all these. If you ask me whether I am optimistic or pessimistic, I can tell you, I am optimistic.

**Mr. Begin:** Ladies and gentlemen, it will take another two hours until President Sadat will be on his way to his country, to Cairo. May I now sum up this momentous visit. It is indeed a momentous visit. We are formally in a state of war, our two countries. As far as I can remember, I do not know of a precedent that the leader of a country that finds itself in a state of war with another country paid such a visit to that country, and was received with so much warmth and sincerity. The reaction was positive in the government, in Parliament, but first and foremost, among our people.

We drove, President Sadat and I, several times together. We have seen our people in the streets, in the thousands — men, women and little children — all of them greeting the President, taking him to their hearts. The children waved both flags, the Egyptian flag and the Israeli flag. I wish, with your permission, Mr. President, to express the hope that the day is not too far when Egyptian children will have the Israeli flag and the Egyptian flag. This visit is a real success for both countries, and the cause of peace.

And, as we both believe, the President and I, in Divine Providence, before the departure of the President and his party, we pray to the Almighty that he give all of us the wisdom to continue in our efforts to bring peace to our nations — real peace — and so to make sure that this region, with all the nations dwelling here, achieves peace, advances, and lives in liberty, in justice and in happiness. Thank you.

**Mr. Sadat:** Well, ladies and gentlemen, may I take this opportunity to thank Prime Minister Begin, the Israeli people and President Katzir for the very warm welcome that was accorded to me here. We are at a crucial moment. Let us hope, all of us, that we can keep the momentum in Geneva. And may God guide the steps of Premier Begin and the Knesset, because there is a great need for hard and drastic decision. I already did my share in my decision to come here, and I shall be really looking forward to those decisions from Premier Begin and the Knesset.

All my best wishes to my friend Premier Begin and his family, and all my deep gratitude to the Israeli people, whose welcome I can never forget. Thank you.

**78. Remarks by President Katzir to President Sadat, 21 November 1977.**

*Prior to departing for the farewell ceremonies at Ben-Gurion airport, President Sadat called on President Katzir at the President's residence in Jerusalem. After an exchange of gifts, President Katzir made the following remarks:*

Mr. President:

I am happy to welcome you here in the President's Residence in Jerusalem, before your departure for Cairo.

This has indeed been a visit of historic importance to both our nations. It has come into being thanks to your determination and your desire to see the long conflict between us reach an end.

It is my hope that the dialogue you have initiated will continue and indeed lead to the opening of a new chapter in the relations between Egypt and Israel.

Geography has made us neighbours, and we are connected by a tradition thousands of years old with roots common to both of us.

You have spoken with our Prime Minister, with our Ministers and the representatives of all the factions in the Knesset. I am sure that you now have a clearer picture of our attitudes and problems.

Despite the differences among the various factions, you have, I am certain, felt that each and every one of them is eager to reach true peace.

During the two days you have been in our country. I have had the opportunity to spend several hours with you, and I have been profoundly impressed by your personality, your devotion to the principles in which you believe, and your sincere will to contribute to the coming of peace and the waking of a better future for all our sons and daughters.

May our going now be blessed, and may you, the people of Egypt and the People of Israel enjoy peace and prosperity.

**79. Message of thanks from President Sadat to President Katzir, 22 November 1977.**

*President Sadat returned to Cairo where he drove to his residence to be welcomed by three and a half million Egyptians. A day after his return he sent a message of thanks to President Katzir in which he expressed the gratitude for the invitation extended to him to visit Israel and for the hospitality. Text:*

His Excellency  
Ephraim Katzir

President of the State of Israel  
Jerusalem

Dear Mr. President

It pleases me following my return back home to extend to Your Excellency, the People of Israel, the Speaker and members of the Knesset, as well as the members of the Israeli government my most sincere appreciation and gratitude for the hospitality accorded me and my delegation during our sojourn in your country.

I would like to avail myself of this occasion to convey, through you, to Mr. Menachem Begin my personal thanks for the invitation he addressed to me to visit your country and the constructive talks we had together with view to achieving genuine peace based on justice.

The audacious step taken by us amounts to an historical turning point in the destiny of our region whose security and stability are closely linked with the security, stability and welfare of the whole world.

Please accept, Mr. President, in my name and on behalf of the people of the Arab Republic of Egypt, my deep thanks and regards.

With my highest consideration and appreciation.

Mohamed Anwar El Sadat

**80. Press conference with Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel television, 23 November 1977.**

*The key question following the Sadat visit, which the Egyptian President had termed a "historic turning point"; was what would be the next step. In this press conference, Mr. Dayan said that Israel would now be required to take hard decisions on all the major issues. He also said that the next step would probably be preparatory talks before a Geneva conference. He added that Egypt indicated it did not want a separate agreement with Israel and that it will try to involve other Arab elements. It appeared that Sadat did not object to going to Geneva on the basis of the Israel-U.S. working paper of 5 October.*  
Text:

**Q.** Since President Sadat concluded his visit here, you have stated twice that we must decide on our positions quickly and be ready for a decision. What did you mean, exactly?

**A.** I meant what I said: that this time, perhaps — I hope so — we shall really arrive at true negotiations for peace agreements, peace treaties — perhaps, and this I am not sure of, with all the Arab states — and we must decide our last-ditch attitudes so that we should not fail in or frustrate the negotiations for peace — which, I believe, are close at hand, at least with Egypt.

**Q.** When you say “we must decide,” to whom are you in fact referring — for it is you and your Ministerial colleagues who must take such decisions?

**A.** When I said “we,” I specified: the Government and the parties. The Government is the representative of the parties, or at least of the coalition parties that are part of it: the NRP, the Likud, the DMC, and so forth. And it wouldn’t hurt if the parties that are not in the coalition determined their positions as well. But definitely, first and foremost the Government and the parties.

**Q.** Does this mean that in your opinion the Government should take decisions which differ from its present positions?

**A.** In the first place, this Government has not actually discussed this subject in detail since its formation. In its Basic Guidelines it set out its general approach, and that was before the DMC joined the Government. Since then there has certainly been no discussion of this subject. But it would be worthwhile even for those who did discuss this subject two or three years ago, to now examine his positions.

**Q.** What do you mean when you say we must form our “last-ditch attitude” — does this refer only to matters between ourselves and the Egyptians, or to the other Arab states as well?

**A.** The Golan Heights and the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as well.

**Q.** That is, we must in the near future decide on the future borders of the State of Israel?

**A.** If the talks with Egypt make progress — the Egyptians say, and I believe them, that they do not intend to make a separate peace treaty only for Egypt — and if, as they say, they do it at Geneva — because Sadat’s visit here and the talks that will come in the wake of the visit — I hope there will be such talks — are no substitute for Geneva, then these two things, the Geneva framework and Egypt’s desire for an overall settlement with all the Arab states, will compel us, too, to consider our positions as regards borders, and the nature of the peace, and other, connected matters, not only vis-a-vis Egypt but vis-a-vis all the Arab states.

**Q.** Mr. Dayan, a personal question: are you also reconsidering your known positions on the subjects of the (Administered) Areas and a settlement?

**A.** Considering, certainly.

**Q.** Do you think you may change any of your conceptions from the near past?

**A.** That I do not yet know.

**Q.** Is it possible?

**A.** I don’t know, I really don’t know. I don’t know yet, I still have to work it out. If you’re really interested in my own personal approach on this issue, then I have to clarify various proposals or possibilities which will also come from the other side. Let us say as regards Egypt: if you refer to Sharm e-Sheikh — I once said that “Sharm e-Sheikh without peace is preferable to peace without Sharm e-Sheikh” — but I was also one of those involved, perhaps even the initiator, after the Six-Day War, in our proposing to return Sinai and the Golan Heights, with certain adjustments and safeguards for our security interests, within the framework of peace agreements. And I was also the one who proposed to Ben-Gurion to prefer that Sharm e-Sheikh — we are speaking now of Sharm e-Sheikh as an illustration — be transferred to Egyptian hands and not to U.N. forces. What I want to say is: each period has its considerations, and now the question fundamentally is that Sharm e-Sheikh means for us the key to freedom of navigation, etc. — things that are well known: the security considerations. So the question is: what will be the alternative proposals to the

present situation? — And then it will be possible to decide whether to make changes, or to stick to this or the other formulation, let us say to the “oral doctrine” (of the Labor Party in the early 1970’s), or to propose changes in that formulation.

**Q.** Do you mean that the positions taken by the present Government under Mr. Begin are inadequate and inappropriate to the new situation created in the wake of President Sadat’s visit?

**A.** I have not proposed a revision (and I know that word — if I had wanted to say that I would have said we must revise our conception), not that, but I said — and I was careful in the word I used — that we must formulate positions, consider positions, because we have reached the moment of decision. As long as we were speaking theoretically and there was no one ready to make a true peace with us, we had not reached the moment of decision. We did, I believe, face the moment of truth — I do not think that we ever, in the history of the country, faked, or evaded the moment of truth — but we never, most of the time, faced the need to decide, only to formulate positions. And it is one thing to formulate a position, and another thing when you must say that a position is not enough, but now we must decide, and decide in a situation presented by the other side as its last-ditch position. I believe — I hope — that we are approaching the moment of decision.

**Q.** In other words, Israel now has to draw her future map.

**A.** Not now, now is too early, but Israel has to be prepared for it that if we really reach that moment, and we listen, and we bargain, and get to that last-ditch position of the Egyptians, the Syrians, and the others, then we should say whether we prefer peace on the basis of those conditions because we can’t get from them any more than that, or whether we would rather have the status quo than accept the conditions they present. We have not yet arrived at that point.

**Q.** But we are approaching it.

**A.** I hope so.

**Q.** Do you think we also need to reconsider our position on the subject of the Palestinians?

**A.** I also said I don’t propose reconsideration — I want you to be precise — I did not say revision, which is what reconsideration means, but I said that the time is approaching — and I suppose that this also applies to the Palestinian question — when we are approaching the hour of decision, and after discussion and bargaining and so forth we shall arrive, at some particular moment, at a position when we shall have to decide whether we are prepared to accept peace and pay, on those conditions that are presented to us, when it seems that we shall not be able to get other conditions, or whether we prefer to maintain the status quo and not accept the peace, in order not to accept those conditions that are too difficult for us, which we must not accept even in return for peace. That is the decision.

**Q.** Do you agree with the general view that President Sadat deserved to get a special quid pro quo from Israel?

**A.** No. And I am perfectly satisfied with the Prime Minister’s speech on that score, not only with the speech as a speech, but with the terms of the Prime Minister’s reply to President Sadat’s address. I even think that if we had offered any territorial quid pro quo to Egypt, not only would we not have done Sadat any good or made things easier for him and ensured his success, but on the contrary we would have made things harder for him. Sadat did not come here in order to go back home with assets he had accumulated here, with a quid pro quo. He emphasized, over and over again, that he had not come to make a separate agreement, or a separate peace. The pressure on him is not from France or Ger-

many or the other countries that ask us to present maps, but from the Arab states. Just imagine the outcry the Arab states would have raised against him if he had gone with a full shopping basket and said: I got it from Israel. They would undoubtedly say: You went there to get things for the benefit of Egypt. We would have made it harder for him. He did not want to hear about anything like that. In fact I asked him before the speech: "Mr. President, what would you like us to say in our address of reply so that your visit here should be a success and not a failure?" He said, "I want you to speak sincerely and to tell me what you are prepared for and what you are not prepared for." That was his reply.

**Q.** I think senior members of the Egyptian delegation were disappointed after the speech.

**A.** On one point, there was something wrong not with the speech but with the translation: that was on the Palestinian question. The impression that was made by the translation, a bad translation, was that we were not prepared to have any contact on negotiations with representatives of the Areas, and that is not what the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister said both in his Knesset speech on the eve of Sadat's arrival and also in his reply to Sadat, that we are ready and willing to talk to real representatives of the Areas, of the Arabs of the Land of Israel, and the interpreter said "Israeli Arabs," which means Arabs living in Israel, citizens of Israel.

Apart from this — which was a mistake and perhaps caused disappointment — I don't know what others expected, but I suggest that we should examine the question of whether they were disappointed or not in the light of the reaction in Egypt on their return. Basically, in my opinion, the question of whether Sadat was disappointed or not depends on the reaction of the Egyptian people, and especially the Egyptian army, to this visit. I don't think the Egyptian people made any distinction between the leader of the Opposition's speech and the Prime Minister's. They saw this mission as a mission, they saw on the TV how Sadat was received here and they saw Sadat's journey to Israel a mission, as Sadat defined it, a mission to break that psychological barrier to a dialogue, how he got off the plane, and the band played the Egyptian anthem in his honour, and he shook hands with the chief of staff and the Prime Minister and the President and Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan and Arik Sharon — all those names they know in Egypt — and the crowds in Israel and the Knesset in Israel welcomed him with affection and enthusiasm and applauded him even when he said those things that perhaps we did not find so pleasant. The public in Egypt saw this as a major success.

**Q.** If the Prime Minister had decided to make some gesture to President Sadat, do you think he would have regarded it as a disappointment?

**A.** Yes. It depends what kind of gesture. If he had said to him: I agree — since we have heard you and have been very impressed by your words, we agree to withdraw from all the Areas and establish a Palestinian state — he would have been delighted, he would have accepted it with great pleasure, but if we had offered him free access to El Arish, or some piece (of territory) here, or said we would withdraw ten kilometres here or there, he would have said: "Thank you very much, I did not come here to collect crumbs under your table. I want peace and total withdrawal and negotiations with all the Arabs, and your giving me so many kilometres of dunams in Sinai for Egypt — thank you very much, that was not what I came for." He would have given it back, rejected it, he would have said: "I don't want that." Do you know why I think so? Someone said so in the private talks.

**Q.** If Israel offered some gesture in connection with the working paper agreed between Israel and the U.S., would he have been disappointed even then?

A. My dear sir, President Sadat said he was satisfied with that paper. He never said the paper was not satisfactory.

Q. He said he was satisfied with it?

A. Yes.

Q. Has Egypt accepted the working paper?

A. President Sadat said he was prepared to go, even before his visit here — I will refresh your memory, I'm glad Ehud Yaari is already nodding his head — President Sadat said as follows: "I am prepared to go to Geneva on the basis of the Israeli-American working paper, it does not interest me, and no power in the world will prevent me going to Geneva to demand a Palestinian state." But even more than that: when he was here we wanted to discuss with him what he thought about the working paper, and he said: "Forget it, it doesn't interest me, the working paper doesn't interest me. I want to talk about peace and not about the working paper." If I may quote myself, he said it in such a sharp and cogent way. I said to him, "I understand" — we were talking in English about the working paper — "I understand you are interested in the working and not the paper." He said, "Well said, that's it exactly, Moshe." So he was interested in the "working" and not in the "paper". We tried to talk to him about it, but it didn't interest him, and he is prepared to go to Geneva on the basis of the working paper. Sadat never asked for a different paper — not that this paper is his heart's desire, but he doesn't care.

Q. When are Israel and Egypt going to Geneva? There's no obstacle?

A. Not so. Egypt does not want a separate peace, and therefore she does not want to go alone to Geneva or anywhere else to make a separate peace. This he emphasized. This is an obstacle. It doesn't matter what Sadat thinks, because Syria is not prepared to go on the basis of this paper. Secondly, Egypt does not want to go to Geneva without prior preparations on matters of substance. She doesn't want to go to Geneva and start with negotiations there. So these are two obstacles. She does not want to go alone and she does not want to go without prior discussions.

Q. When President Sadat told you he wanted to talk about the "working" and not about the "paper", were you prepared?

A. Yes.

Q. Then you discussed substantive matters?

A. We were even ready, while he was here, to go into substantive matters, but time was pressing and it was agreed between us that the talks would have to continue — but talks on substance, not procedure. And I hope they will continue.

Q. Then, if Israel and Egypt are holding bilateral talks on substantive issues, the Geneva Conference must be virtually worthless. Is the United States pleased about this?

A. Let me, then, reiterate: Egypt is not ready to make a separate agreement with us, nor can it speak in the name of Syria. Therefore it needs all the Arab states, and the framework for that is Geneva. Egypt will not sign a separate peace agreement with us, therefore he said that these meetings, those in Israel and those to follow, are not a substitute for Geneva but a preparation for Geneva, in anticipation of Geneva, and not in place of Geneva. That is what Sadat said.

Q. Since, as you say, Egypt has accepted the working paper, and since that working paper refers to Palestinian representation at Geneva, perhaps you could say who those Palestinians will be.

A. I don't know, and we didn't go into that with Sadat, he did not raise the question,



and we didn't discuss it with him. That is a question for a separate interview.

**Q.** You did not discuss at all the question of Palestinian representation at Geneva?

**A.** No.

**Q.** Article four of the working paper says that the solution to the question of the Palestinian refugees and the Jewish refugees is to be discussed in line with guidelines which must be agreed upon. Have you already come to an agreement on them?

**A.** What exactly are we speaking of: Sadat, Geneva, what? As for the working paper, we did not discuss either article four or article three, neither the Palestinians nor the working paper — if you want to talk about the working paper, I'm more than willing, but...

**Q.** The Foreign Minister also said they discussed the "working" and not so much the...

**A.** We did not discuss (it), the working paper was not placed on the table and we did not deal with it, and he did not ask for any change in it and we did not discuss a single paragraph in it.

**Q.** You have claimed that the road to Geneva is paved, that all the problems have been solved. Is that correct?

**A.** As far as procedure goes, Sadat is ready to go to Geneva on the basis of the working paper. But he says that he is not ready to go to Geneva, first of all without advance preparation, that is, talks on substance. So the way is not paved.

**Q.** Bilateral talks?

**A.** When he speaks with us, those are bilateral talks. Secondly, he does not want to go to Geneva or anywhere else where a peace agreement is signed, without other Arab states, without a resolution of the Palestinian question. Therefore he cannot go to Geneva, if he does not want to without Syria, let us say, and it is not he who can hold preparatory talks about the Golan Heights. That is the situation. In anticipation of Geneva, for him the obstacle or the barrier he must overcome is not the working paper or the procedural aspect, but substantive clarifications from his point of view in regard to Egypt, and the participation of the other Arab countries. Without these two things he cannot go to Geneva. He hopes Geneva will convene.

**Q.** Can you tell us how the contacts between Israel and Egypt will continue?

**A.** First of all, I should like to take advantage of the opportunity of this interview to say, not vis-a-vis Premier Begin — as far as he is concerned there is clear understanding — but to the public. When the public hears about "continuation" of the visit here, it gets the impression that Egypt is ready to continue the normalization of relations, and I have already seen how the Histadrut Secretary-General is inviting the head of the (Egyptian) trade union federation, and soccer teams and orchestras. Now, I have nothing against this — but, friends, that is not the idea. "Continuation" for them means not to make progress with the normalization of relations while we continue to hold all the territories, but to advance only as regards one subject: the discussing and achievement of a peace agreement — only that and not in any other spheres. So, on that subject, they want substantive talks between their representatives and our representatives. But no technical arrangements have been worked out on this, only the principle.

**Q.** Have the levels of representation been decided upon?

**A.** Only the principle.

**Q.** Then if I have understood you, the preparatory process for the Geneva Conference might well be more important than the Conference itself, and instead of being the start of a process, it will perhaps be the end of one.

A. You are right: that is the basic difference between the American approach and the Egyptian. The Americans thought—I think—that the negotiating process must be begun with the convening of Geneva, and then to split up into working groups for negotiations. I do not say that the Egyptians say that the negotiations have to be concluded before that, and to come to Geneva just for the signing. But they do not think that we should go to Geneva before sufficient substantive preparations have been made. There is another important point to bear in mind here, and Sadat made it very clearly. His attitude towards the Russians is one of total reservation, and he has a certain grudge against the Americans for having brought the Russians in through that joint statement. That is one of the reasons he gives that to go to Geneva with a Russian co-chairman, and to conduct negotiations under Russian, not American chairmanship — he said that was not for him; they had enough of the Russians in Egypt and that was not for him. But that was only an example that I wanted to give concerning Egypt's attitude both towards the Russians and vis-a-vis certain American approaches to the time and place for the Geneva Conference.

Q. By the process of elimination, if Sadat feels resentment against the Russians and to some extent against the Americans — and certainly he is not exactly popular at the moment in the Arab world — is Israel the only friend he has left?

A. That is a caricature. He is slightly annoyed with the Americans for having brought in the Russians, but he does not reject the Americans as chairmen and mediators; on the contrary, he is counting on the Americans not only as chairmen but as those who will help in the reconstruction of Egypt. When he wants peace, he also wants the fruits of peace, which are economic fruits and the raising of the standard of living — and the address for that is America. Not only does he not reject the U.S. but he threw off the U.S.S.R. in order to draw closer to the United States. As regards the other Arab states, they say: This is already a tradition in the Arab world — fight and make up, fight and make up — so there is just now a quarrel with some of the Arab states.

May I make a comment here on this matter. To a large extent and in many spheres, Egypt can live without Syria; but it is very hard for Syria and other small Arab states to live without Egypt. Egypt can make war without Syria — war against us, against Israel — without other Arab countries, or make peace without them too. Syria cannot. And today there are, at Egypt's side — it is not so isolated — both Sudan and Tunisia and Morocco, and I don't yet know where Jordan stands in all this. So Syria and Libya and Algeria are against Egypt. You know what? They cannot live without Egypt.

Q. Mr. Dayan, is it possible to bridge over the differences between Sadat's view of Israel's security and the Israel Government's?

A. I do not know how to bridge the differences. These are two entirely different points of view. What Sadat sees as Israel's security is not his most cherished wish. When he says he recognizes Israel's need for security, he immediately adds a definition of security. He says that this security does not mean defensible borders, or territories, or straits, but arrangements: demilitarization and arms, treaties and warning stations and guarantees; all sorts of things, all of which are meant for one purpose. He said: "Withdraw from all the territories. I recognize and agree with your need for security, but you will get this security not in the form of territories — a hill here, a river there, a strait somewhere else, etc. — but through international agreements." This is what he means. Not so much the positive as the negative.

Q. Is it really possible to reconcile these two conceptions?

**A.** I do not know whether it is necessary to reconcile the points of view. The negotiations will encompass everything. It will deal with borders, arrangements, both borders and territories. We don't have to build bridges.

**Q.** What, in your opinion, is the future of Sharm e-Sheikh in the agreement which will be reached between Israel and Egypt?

**A.** This is a subject for negotiations. There's no point — you don't expect me to say something here — but I want to say that I am willing to approach the issue with an open mind and listen to various suggestions, Egyptian and other, not only the initial proposals. What Sadat said here was a starting point — not a bargaining point from which he has decided in advance that he is willing to withdraw. He presented the fundamental Arab position: The Arab position means withdrawal from all the territories to the last inch, a Palestinian state with the right to self-determination, and so forth.

But what brought Sadat here? What brought Sadat here for this visit was Egypt's own need for peace, not Egypt's need for Israel to have peace, but the vital need of Egypt, the country of Egypt, the Egyptian people, for peace. He too will have to weigh this in the balance. As I said previously, when he will have to consider our proposals he will have to decide which he prefers: to remain in this situation, which is apparently not very comfortable for him, in fact it is difficult enough to bring him on his plane to Ben-Gurion airport and to the Knesset. He too will have to decide whether he is willing to move the Israeli position. He did not say, after hearing Prime Minister Begin, who presented the Israeli position, he did not say: "If you do not accept our position, I have nothing to go to Geneva about, nothing to discuss with you." He said, "I have heard your position, it is different from ours, let us go on to the talks." So we'll go on to the talks, and Sharm e-Sheikh will be included in these discussions. It is far too soon to say what will be the end-result of the discussions, be the future of Sharm e-Sheikh. The future of Sharm e-Sheikh is the end point of the discussions, not their starting-point.

**Q.** But I noted that you view this issue with an open mind, that you are willing to listen to proposals.

**A.** Certainly. Of course I am willing to listen to proposals. And not only on Sharm e-Sheikh.

**Q.** How do you view the expression "No more war after October" — is this a slogan, or also a mutual commitment?

**A.** I certainly do not regard it as an operative commitment. It is not a slogan, it is more than a slogan, but it is anchored, on Sadat's part, in his first statement, "You should get out of the territories, off the Arab land," and it would not be fair to ourselves if we try to separate the two and say "But he said 'No more war!'" It's true that he also said: "Leave the Arab land," but he (one might say) does not link the two things." He definitely does link the two topics. When he says "No more war," as a goal, as a slogan, it is tied in, on his part, with our not sitting on Arab soil, what he calls Arab soil. If we remain in all the territories I do not think that it will be possible to come and say to ourselves that we were promised that there will be no more war. So why should we bother with all this? That would be a superficial view of the matter. The saying "No more war" — from his point of view, even its sincere part — is closely linked to withdrawal from the territories. In both cases it is, at any rate, not an operative statement. It is not a saying which means: "Look, I Sadat, am going home, sending the soldiers home, disarming, putting an end to procurement, not repairing the Migs." You'll see how they'll repair all the Migs, and so forth. In any case,

there is some kind of connection between the preparation of the Egyptian army and this declaration. This is not a declaration of disarmament.

**Q.** Do you expect that in the coming days or weeks that, in the wake of the Sadat visit, Egypt will lower its propaganda profile against Israel, will perhaps make some gesture as regards the Arab boycott — Egypt has already closed down the PLO radio station in Cairo. What will the Egyptian tone be?

**A.** When you say Egypt has already closed down the PLO broadcasting station, one might think it did so because the PLO had vilified Israel. She did so because the PLO vilified Sadat and not Israel. This has nothing to do with any softening of hostile propaganda against us, but measures against those who vilified and reviled Sadat. They have done this in the past, too: every time the PLO came out against the Egyptian rulers they shut down that station and expelled its representatives. I don't know, I don't know, I regard the cardinal question — and I am sure that the Egyptians do, too, because they said so — as that of continuation, and continuation on this one subject only: progress towards a peace agreement. And should there be meetings, and those meetings produce progress, then other things of the kind you mentioned might also go along with them.

**Q.** When is Hussein likely to join the process?

**A.** I don't know.

**Q.** Perhaps you could share with us some of your impressions of President Sadat's personality?

**A.** I am not good at that. I remember every word he said on the subjects we discussed and the contents of his statements, but I'm no good at character description, that's not my area. I'm sorry.

**Q.** Is there not a contradiction between the fact that a large part of the substance will be discussed before Geneva and the fact that, as President Sadat said, Geneva will be convened immediately?

**A.** President Sadat does not say that Geneva is to be convened forthwith. There is no contradiction.

**Q.** The Prime Minister stated at the joint press conference that Geneva would be convened even before Christmas or immediately thereafter.

**A.** The Prime Minister said that Sadat, that the Government of Israel is ready for the convening of Geneva at any time, and has no desire to postpone it. I don't know if you are quoting correctly, but I know what Sadat said and I am certain that the Prime Minister did not say anything different. Sadat said he wants a continuation of the substantive dialogue which has started — and it has started with his meeting here — before Geneva. So I don't know what "forthwith" means, but if that substantive clarification has to take time, well, Sadat said that Geneva has to follow the clarification: the idea is not to prepare all the forms for signing, but a thorough clarification.

In the meantime, I think that additional factors enter in here, the present rift between Syria and Egypt, let us say, is also a factor hindering the intra-Arab dialogue on this subject. So I don't know what the Prime Minister may have said, I didn't hear it, and it is true that from the point of view of the working paper, as regards the procedural aspect, Sadat has no objections to going to Geneva tomorrow; he himself said he did not care, he could go on the basis of the working paper, "I do not care, even without any paper let's go to Geneva." But he does care about not going to Geneva without any preparation.

**Q.** Is it your impression that Saudi Arabia is supporting him, even if tacitly?

A. I don't know, we did not discuss that. I am aware of Saudi Arabia's public stand, which spoke against the visit, that King Khaled spoke against it.

Q. And your assessment?

A. What the King says must be so, I don't know.

Q. To sum up, would you say the most important thing now is that we must prepare ourselves quickly for fateful decisions?

A. No. The main thing, as I see it, is that on the Egyptian side — and this is the key thing — I believe there is on the Egyptian side readiness to make a peace treaty with us. Not under any conditions, and under conditions which are in fact very difficult for us, and so on. Secondly, they want continuation of the clarification, and that is the immediate thing. If both those things are correct — both that it transpires that their desire is sincere, and that I have not erred on this, that we have not erred, and the preliminary substantive clarifications will take place—then in 1977 or 1978—I don't know how long these talks will continue — we will reach that moment, that stage, when we shall have to decide if, under those conditions, after all the clarifications and all the debates, etc., if we can reach a peace agreement or not, arrive at a decision.

## **81. General Assembly Resolution 32/20 on the situation in the Middle East, 25 November 1977.**

*Fully ignoring the historic developments that have taken place in Jerusalem a mere five days before the resolution was adopted, the majority of the General Assembly voted on a resolution which reiterated previous positions, calling for Israeli withdrawal from the territories, for the early convening of a peace conference with PLO participation. The resolution welcomed the joint U.S.-Soviet statement of 1 October 1977 but said nothing about the Sadat visit. The resolution was adopted by 102 in favour, 4 against and 29 abstentions. Text:*

### **The General Assembly,**

**Having discussed** the item entitled "The situation in the Middle East",

**Recalling** its previous resolutions of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976, concerning the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine,

**Deeply concerned** that the Arab territories occupied since 1967 have continued, for more than ten years, to be under illegal Israeli occupation and that the Palestinian people, after three decades, are still deprived of the exercise of their inalienable national rights,

**Reaffirming** that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible and that all territories thus occupied must be returned,

**Reaffirming also** the urgent necessity of the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region, based on full respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well as for its resolutions concerning the problem of the Middle East including the question of Palestine,

**Taking note with satisfaction** of the joint statement on the Middle East issued on 1 October 1977 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Secretary of State of the United States of America in their capacities as Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East,

**Reaffirming** that peace is indivisible and that a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem must be based on a comprehensive solution, under the auspices of the United Nations, which takes into account all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in particular the attainment by the Palestinian people of all their inalienable national rights and the Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories,

**Convinced** that the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, is essential for the realization of a just and lasting settlement in the region,

1. **Condemns** Israel's continued occupation of Arab territories, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and repeated resolutions of the United Nations;

2. **Reaffirms** that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, in which all countries and peoples in the region can live in peace and security within recognized and secure boundaries, cannot be achieved without Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967 and the attainment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable national rights;

3. **Calls anew** for the early convening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, under the auspices of the United Nations and the co-chairmanship of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, with the participation on an equal footing of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization;

4. **Urges** the parties to the conflict and all other interested parties to work towards the achievement of a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the problems and worked out with the participation of all parties concerned within the framework of the United Nations;

5. **Requests** the Security Council, in the exercise of its responsibilities under the Charter, to take all necessary measures in order to ensure the implementation of relevant resolutions of the United Nations and to facilitate the achievement of such a comprehensive settlement aiming at the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region;

6. **Requests** the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and to inform all concerned, including the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East;

7. **Also requests** the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council periodically on the development of the situation and to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session a comprehensive report covering, in all their aspects, the developments in the Middle East.

**82. Statement by Israel government spokesman on the Cairo conference, 26 November 1977.**

*A few days after his return from Jerusalem, President Sadat decided to convene in Cairo a preparatory conference prior to proceeding to Geneva. The meeting would be an informal one. Egypt intended to invite to the talks representatives of Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon as well as American and Soviet representatives. Even before the official invitation reached Israel, the government spokesman announced that Israel would take part in the talks but warned against setting any prior conditions and reiterated the Israeli position on the future borders and a Palestinian state. Text:*

When the official invitation of the Egyptian Foreign Minister will reach Jerusalem the Cabinet will decide whom to authorize to represent it at the Cairo talks.

The demands of the President of Egypt for the withdrawal by Israel to the lines of June 4, 1967 and for the establishment of a Palestinian State contradict the position of Israel.

This position, supported by more than 100 out of 120 members of the Knesset, will continue to serve as the basis for any negotiation for concluding the peace agreements between Israel and each of its neighbors. As agreed between Egypt and Israel, such negotiations will be conducted without prior conditions from any side.

**83. Statement in the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin on the Cairo conference, 28 November 1977.**

*On 27 November, the Egyptian Ambassador to the United Nations met his Israeli counterpart and handed him an official invitation for Israel to participate in the Cairo conference. Foreign Minister Dayan was in Germany on an official visit, thus the Prime Minister, acting also as Foreign Minister, replied to the Egyptian invitation. Recalling the events that led to the Sadat visit, and describing the atmosphere that prevailed during the talks, Mr. Begin announced that Israel would go to Cairo for face to face negotiations, for the first time in the history of Israel. The Cairo conference was due to open on 3 December, but was postponed for ten days at the request of the United States. That power had hoped to persuade Syria and Jordan to attend the Cairo talks. Text of the Begin statement:*

Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Knesset,

Yesterday evening, in a happy and fortunate hour, two ambassadors met, shook hands and gave each other the greeting of peace: One, the Ambassador of Egypt to the United Nations Organization, and the second, the Ambassador of Israel to the U.N. The first handed the second a letter, and this was its content:

*To his Excellency Mr. Moshe Dayan,  
Foreign Minister of Israel.*

*Your Excellency,*

*I beg to inform you of the initiative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to convene in Cairo an informal meeting of the parties to the Middle East dispute, as well as the co-chairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. This meeting is intended to prepare the conference in Geneva and ensure its success, with the aim of achieving an overall settlement of the Middle East conflict, in order to establish a just and durable peace in the area. I therefore invite you to appoint your representative to take part in the informal meeting which will take place in Cairo on the agreed date, starting on the 3rd of December 1977.*

*Please accept assurances of my profound esteem,*

*Dr. Boutrous Ghali  
Acting Foreign Secretary, Arab Republic of Egypt*

The Government decided to accept this initiative. This morning I consulted the Foreign Minister by telephone, and we agreed that the representatives of Israel to the Cairo talks should be Dr. Eli Ben-Elissar, Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office, and Dr. Meir Rosenne, legal adviser of the Foreign Ministry. Of course, if it transpires in the course of the discussions that it is necessary to expand our delegation, we shall do so.

I signed the letter of reply to Dr. Ghali. Its contents will be telegraphed immediately to our Ambassador, Haim Herzog, who will hand over our reply to the Egyptian Ambassador to the U.N., Mr. Megid.

Mr. Speaker,

Thus will open the direct negotiations for the preparation of the Geneva Conference, negotiations we have always wanted, face to face, between ourselves and our neighbors, for the sake of establishing true peace in the area. This exchange of letters is a direct expression of the meeting that took place a week ago in Jerusalem, and I ask your permission, Mr. Speaker, to tell the Knesset how the hour for the holding of that meeting came.

On the ninth of November 1977, the Egyptian President, Mr. Sadat, addressed the Egyptian People's Assembly, which is the Egyptian parliament, and said, *inter alia*, the following: "I state in all seriousness that I am prepared to go to the end of the world — and Israel will be surprised to hear me tell you that I am ready to go to their home, to the Knesset itself, to argue with them. Members of the National Council, we have no time to waste."

These words were published on the tenth of November, and on the same day I issued the following announcement in the name of the Government of Israel:

"If this is no figure of speech, and President Sadat is really prepared to come to the Knesset in Jerusalem, we welcome this readiness. I must recall that, when I took up my post, I announced that I would be ready to meet the President of Egypt at any place, including Cairo, to negotiate with him on the establishment of true peace in the Middle East." I further stated: "Israel rejects in advance, without reserve, President Sadat's conditions, namely, withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967 and the establishment of a so-called



Palestinian state. These conditions are a danger to the very existence of the State of Israel. But President Sadat will be able to express this position of his at the Geneva Conference, as we shall be able to present to it our positions. Let no party transform its positions into prior conditions for participation in the Peace Conference.

I had two further opportunities to hold out my hand to President Sadat and invite him to come to our country, to Jerusalem. On the 11th of November I made a speech — true, it was in English, but it was a direct appeal to the Egyptian people. I said to our neighbors, *inter alia*: “You should know that back we came to the land of our fathers, that it is we who liberated this country from British rule, and we established our independence in our land, for all generations to come. Let us say one to another, and let it be a silent oath by both peoples of Egypt and Israel: No more wars, no more bloodshed, and no more threats. We can help each other. We can make the lives of our nations better, easier, happier. Your President said, two days ago, that he will be ready to come to Jerusalem, to our parliament. — the Knesset — in order to prevent one Egyptian soldier from being wounded. It is a good statement. I have already welcomed it, and it will be a pleasure to welcome and receive your President with the traditional hospitality you and we have inherited from our common father, Abraham.”

I have further public opportunities of sending invitations to President Sadat to come to us. During that week it transpired, from information I received through the United States Embassy, that President Sadat expected a written and official invitation from me. I did not hesitate for a moment. I wrote the invitation, and we sent it to Cairo through the American Embassy. And thus I concluded my written invitation: “Our legislature, the Government and the people will welcome you with honor and cordiality.”

On the next day, I was given a statement, confidential at the time, that President Sadat wanted to come to us at the end of the Sabbath. And from Cairo the question came to me at what time he should and could come in order that the Sabbath should not be desecrated. My reply was: between half-past-seven and eight in the evening. It should be known, Mr. Speaker, that our state is the Jewish state, and it will honour the Sabbath in the eyes of the whole world, and therefore President Sadat, too, understood that if he wanted to come to us at the ending of the Sabbath, the time must be calculated so that we should not desecrate the Sabbath in order to prepare the meeting.

I must add, Mr. Speaker, that on last Sabbath eve a personal letter to me from President Carter reached the U.S. Embassy, but the President of the United States instructed the Ambassador not to bring it to me until the end of the Sabbath, and he told the American Ambassador expressly not to bring this letter, this important, friendly letter before the ending of the Sabbath. Mr. Speaker, we respect the Muslim day of rest, which is Friday, and the Christian day of rest, which is Sunday. We ask all nations, both near and far, to respect the Sabbath. But they will respect it if we respect it.

(Interruption.) I did not hear the interruption, but no Sabbath was desecrated in connection with his arrival. I should ask, that when you speak of one of the greatest values of the Jewish people and humanity, not to permit yourselves so-called ironies. You should listen seriously, with respect.

Mr. Speaker,

Deeply moved, I read again those eternal verses, “Observe the Sabbath day and sanctify it as the Lord thy God has commanded. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, and the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord thy God. Thou shalt do no labour, thou

and thy son and thy daughter, and thy servant and thy maidservant, and thy ox and thy ass, and all thy cattle, and the stranger within thy gates, so that thy servant and thy maidservant shall rest like thee. And remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord thy God brought thee out of there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to observe the Sabbath day." One of the greatest ideas in the history of mankind from the social and moral point of view: so that the slave should rest, and the poor man, and not only the rich man, who can rest every day in the week. And now let it be known that we shall honour our Sabbath in this way and ask representatives of all the nations to respect it.

The President of Egypt arrived on the outgoing of the Sabbath. We invited him to come to the Knesset to deliver his address to us, and he stood on this rostrum and said all that he wanted to say. Not only did we not know a single word of the content of his speech, we did not ask to know. We said in advance that his demands for complete withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967 and the establishment of a so-called Palestinian state are not acceptable. But he is entitled to come and make them in the Knesset and, through it, to the world.

On the following day we enabled him to meet all the parties in our parliament, including the Opposition parties, including the Communist Party. He told them all he wanted to say, and they answered him as they wished.

Today, too, Mr. Speaker, we shall praise and honour the decision of the Egyptian President and the courage he showed in coming to us to the Knesset. I have looked for precedents in history as we know it in which the leader of a country in a state of war with another country came to that state and spoke to it as President Sadat spoke to us. I have found none. There have been meetings of heads of state between whom there was no peace. But we have four wars behind us, thousands of casualties in our hearts. There is an abyss between us. Barbed-wire fences have separated one nation from another for 29 whole years, and therefore I have not yet found any similar event.

But there is no precedent either to the way we welcomed the President of Egypt. I have not found that any nation with which another nation is in a state of war has welcomed the leader of that nation with honour, with cordiality, with affection — the nation, the legislature, the Government.

These were two great days for Israel. The gesture of his coming was responded to by the gesture of his reception. And I can say, Mr. Speaker, all honour to Israeli democracy — in its working, in the way it shows itself towards an enemy — I hope we can soon say a former enemy — is an example to other nations.

The things that were said in public, whether from this rostrum, or in the Knesset building or on the television screens, are known to all and there is no need to repeat them. But there were also personal conversations between President Sadat and myself, between members of the Egyptian delegation and members of the Israeli delegation. Mr. Speaker, atmosphere is not decisive, but it is important, and I want to tell the House that the atmosphere in which our private conversations were conducted was warm, cordial, human. The talks were conducted with candor. Each side expressed its attitude. No side tried to find favor in the eyes of the other side by denying its positions. How did President Sadat say it? "I ask you to put all your cards on the table" — and thus we spoke, each to his rival, each to his neighbor, with sincerity. And all our talks ended with the same silent mutual declaration: "No more wars, no more bloodshed, no more threats."

This time we explained to each other — and we understood it, and we shall explain it to anyone who wishes to hear — what is the meaning of the concept "without prior condi-

tions." This concept does not say that either of the sides has no position. It does not say that there are no differences of opinion between the parties. On the contrary, we said to each other that there are differences of opinion between us in regard to the content of the peace treaties, in regard to the conditions for true peace in the Middle East. But no party stipulates, or will stipulate in the future, that the holding of peace talks is conditional on the other side accepting its position in advance — neither they nor we. This is the meaning of the concept "without prior conditions" as we stated on the establishment of the second national unity government, by amending one of the paragraphs of that Government's basic principles. And now this concept is plain to all.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the greatest achievement at the talks in Jerusalem is the fact that we really said seriously each to other, "No more war." Of course, there are also some who like to cast doubt on everything. Good luck to them. I want to tell the Israeli legislature that we accepted this statement by the President of Egypt in all seriousness. Of course, there never was any doubt as to the sincerity of our statement. I demonstrated from this rostrum that we wanted peace on the renewal of our independence, in the day of our resurgence. And ever since then, until this very day, we have held out our hands for peace. And today there is a situation in which both countries, both Governments, have promised and undertaken, in the hearing of all the nations, that they will never again take up arms against each other. There are differences of opinion between us — we shall bring them to negotiation. This is the most important mutual statement and, as you have noticed, President Sadat also confirmed it when he spoke to his own Parliament.

Mr. Speaker,

The President of Egypt made a speech before the People's Assembly in Cairo. There is a part in this speech which we welcomed in Jerusalem and we continue to welcome it now, from Jerusalem. But there is also a part which is not acceptable to us, and if I decided to go into a detailed polemic with this speech, I would go into the history of the Yom Kippur War, its beginning and its conclusion. And I would say again, on behalf of 113 members of this Knesset, at least, that we do not accept either the demand for total withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines, or the demand for the establishment of so-called Palestinian state, or the demand for the re-partition of Jerusalem.

But today, Mr. Speaker, I have made up my mind to eschew polemic in detail; the main thing is the future. And no matter how it was said, our position is known, as I have read out the documents that were published in the name of the Government before the President of Egypt arrived in Jerusalem. The main thing, as I said, is the future, and we shall work in the future for the holding of peace talks for the establishment of peace.

We want the peace to be between ourselves and all our neighbours. And again: let these things be heard in Damascus and in Amman, in Beirut and in Baghdad, and in all the Arab capitals from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. We do not want to drive any wedge between the Arab countries, and we did not offer President Sadat, when he was in Jerusalem, a separate peace treaty with Egypt. We want peace on all sectors, and on all borders, and with all our neighbours.

And although there is a storm today in part of the Arab world — there are some members of that organization than which none baser has arisen in the history of mankind, except for the Nazi organizations, who today threaten the life of President Sadat — although this storm is raging, we find it necessary and possible, it is our right and our duty, to call upon President Assad to decide on the opening of peace talks with representatives of Israel.

whether in Jerusalem or in Damascus, or in Geneva, or anywhere else, as he may propose. Because we want peace with Syria, we want no more injuries to our children, and we do not want Syrian children to be injured anymore.

And we want peace with King Hussein so that we may be able to build our lives together, and to think how to open a new era for this country. And it goes without saying, we want, no less, to establish permanent peace with Lebanon. The border between Lebanon and Israel was for years the quietest of our borders — recently it has not been so. And we were also bound — and we shall continue to be bound — to protect the Christian minority, so that it should not be wiped out by vile men. We propose to all of them that they should send delegations...

(Interjection: The Palestinian people as well?)

Mr. Wilner, listen to me now, please. I am talking to you as one Jew to another. Listen and don't interrupt. I speak Hebrew. That word you used is not Hebrew, it is jargon. When the first British High Commissioner was here and it was necessary to decide what name for the country could be stamped on the coins — those with a hole in them — then in English, of course, they engraved "Palestine" — there was no doubt: in English the name of the country was Palestine, and in Arabic, "Filastin" — there is no doubt about it, that is the name of the country in Arabic. But it had to be decided how it should be in Hebrew, and they said: Of course, "Eretz Yisrael." That has always been the name of the country, since days of old, in all generations. But there were protests: How can we say "Eretz Yisrael" so expressly? And then, that British High Commissioner found a compromise. He would write "Palestina", which is not Hebrew at all, but he would add in parentheses, "Aleph Yud" — so the Jews read it "Eretz Yisrael" — and those who did not understand so well read "Palestina (Ai)". And now do you know the origin of this word? And I speak Hebrew, my dear sir, not Sovietish.

(Interjection: Is there a Palestinian people or not?)

There is an Arab people.

(Interjection: A Palestinian people?)

I have already told you: I speak Hebrew, not Sovietish. When you are in Moscow you can speak in your own language.

Mr. Speaker.

We have set foot on the road to the establishment of peace. I ask the House to give its blessing for this road on which we are going to go. And I have an appeal to all the members of the Knesset, without distinction between most of the parties. Dear friends, honoured rivals, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Knesset: this is an important hour for our people. And since, as you have noticed, I have not wanted, ever since we received the news about the possibility of President Sadat coming to our country, to exaggerate, I will not use any other adjective: enough if we say "an important hour." There is no need to compete in "concessionism." We are not in exile, but in our homeland, not in the ghetto, but in our sovereign state. It is not fitting that there should be competition as to who is a more peace-loving Jew and who is a less peace-loving Jew. The truth is that we all want peace with all our hearts and all our souls. We want peace, we pray for it and long for it, and we also hope to bring it about. True we have straightened our backs in the Land of Israel. We shall not grow arrogant, but we shall not bow our heads either. We shall insist on our people's rights, on its security and peace, and with God's help we shall succeed in bringing true peace to our people and our neighbours, because peace is necessary to us and also to them.

Mr. Speaker,

Before I parted with the President of Egypt in front of the aircraft, I said to him: "Mr. President, we shall make peace." And he answered me: "I am sure of it." Later, I saw a famous weekly with pictures on two sides: President Sadat holds his one-year-old grandson in his arms and, on the other side, I hold my two granddaughters. Let the whole world look at these children on the left and on the right. This is humanity, this is the consolation, this is the light of our eyes — and there is no difference between Jews and Arabs, between Israeli and Egyptian. For the sake of our grandchildren, and for the sake of all the children of Israel, and all the children of Egypt, let us make peace.

**84. Letter from Prime Minister Begin to Acting Foreign Minister Ghali, 28 November 1977.**

*Following is the text of the letter from Prime Minister Begin to the Egypt Acting Foreign Minister Butrus Ghali announcing Israel's acceptance of the invitation to attend the Cairo conference and the names of the Israeli representatives:*

Dr. Boutros Ghali  
Acting Foreign Minister  
of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Excellency,

I wish to thank you for your invitation to attend an informal meeting in Cairo to prepare for the reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference.

I designate as representatives of Israel to this meeting:

Dr. Eliahu Ben-Elissar  
Director-General  
Prime Minister's Office

Dr. Meir Rosenne  
The Legal Advisor  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Any date after December 3, 1977 is acceptable to us.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Menahem Begin  
Prime Minister and Acting Minister  
of Foreign Affairs

**85. Security Council Resolution 420 (1977) extending the mandate of UNDOF, 30 November 1977.**

*As a matter of routine, the Security Council extended by another six months the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force on the Golan Heights. The resolution was adopted by 12 votes to none. Benin, China and Libya did not participate. On behalf of all the members of the Council, the President read the following note:*

The Security Council,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (s/12453),

Having noted the efforts made to establish a durable and just peace in the Middle East area and the urgent need to continue and intensify such efforts,

Expressing concern over the prevailing state of tension in the area,  
decides:

(A) To call upon the parties concerned to implement immediately Security Council Resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973;

(B) To renew the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for another period of six months, that is, until 31 May 1978;

(C) To request the Secretary-General to submit at the end of this period a report on the development in the situation and the measures taken to implement Security Council Resolution 338 (1973).

Note by the President of the Security Council

In connection with the adoption of the resolution on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, I have been authorized to make the following complementary statement on behalf of the Security Council regarding the resolution just adopted:

*"As is known, the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (s/12453) states in paragraph 32 that 'the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector should not obscure the fact that the main elements of the Middle East problem remain unresolved and that the situation in the area will continue to be unstable and dangerous unless real progress can soon be made towards a just and durable settlement of the problem in all its aspects'. This statement of the Secretary-General reflects the view of the Security Council."*

Further, on behalf of the delegations of Benin, China and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, I wish to state that as they have not participated in the vote on this resolution, they take the same position with regard to the statement which I have just read out on behalf of the members of the Council.

**86. Press conference with President Carter, 30 November 1977.**

*The United States played an important role in the arrangements that led to the visit of President Sadat. Before, during and after the visit, there was steady contact by letter, cable and telephone between President Carter and Prime Minister Begin, who on a number of occasions thanked the President for the role of the U.S. in bringing about the historic breakthrough. On 29 November the U.S. announced it will attend the Cairo Conference, and in his press conference the President stated that the United States role would be a supportive one, that would encourage initiatives presented by the parties. The U.S. was still hoping that other Arab nations and the Soviet Union would attend the Cairo talks. Meanwhile Syria announced that it would not attend the conference and Jordan said it would go neither to Cairo nor to Tripoli, where the rejectionist Arab states were planning their own conference. Text of the Middle East sections of the press conference follow:*

The other comment I would like to make is concerning the Middle East. In the last few days we have seen, I believe, an historic breakthrough in the search for a permanent lasting peace in the Middle East, because of the true leadership qualities that have been exhibited by the courage of President Sadat, and the gracious reception of him in Israel by Prime Minister Begin.

This has been already a tremendous accomplishment. I think the importance of it is that there has been an initiation of direct person-to-person negotiations between Israel and the major power in the Mideast among the Arab nations who are Israel's neighbors. Lebanon, Syria, Jordan have a total population of about 12 million. Egypt has a population of 36 million, and has by far the greatest military force. And the fact that this strongest Arab country and the nation of Israel are now conducting direct negotiations is a major accomplishment in itself.

Two of Israel's most cherished desires have already been met. One is this face-to-face negotiation possibility and the other one is a recognition by a major Arab leader that Israel has a right to exist.

In fact, President Sadat said, "We welcome you in our midst."

The United States has been very pleased to see this reduction in distrust and a reduction in fear and a reduction in suspicion between the Arabs and the Israelis. We have played a close consultative role with both of these leaders. We have on several instances recently acted as intermediaries, at their request. Both Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat have publicly expressed their reconfirmation that these exploratory talks are designed to lead toward a comprehensive settlement, including Israel and all her neighbors.

Sunday President Sadat called for a conference in Cairo. This is likely to be held around the 13th of December, about the middle of December. We will participate in that conference at a high level. Assistant Secretary Atherton will represent our nation.

We look on this as a very constructive step. The road toward peace which has already led through Jerusalem will now go to Cairo; And ultimately we believe to a comprehensive consultation at Geneva.

It is not an easy thing to bring about a comprehensive peace settlement. Immediate expectations have sometimes been exaggerated. The definition of real peace, I think we have

made good progress on that already. The resolution of the Palestinian question still has not been decided. And the solution to the problem concerning borders and national security has also not been decided. We have played, I think, a proper role. I have tried to convince, in the past, Prime Minister Begin of the good intentions of President Sadat and vice versa. When there has been no progress being made, the United States has taken the initiative. Now that progress is being made, a proper role for the United States is to support that progress and to give the credit to the strong leadership that has already been exhibited by Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat and to let our nation be used as called upon to expedite the peace process.

I believe that this is a move that the whole world looks upon with great appreciation and again, I want to express my congratulations and my appreciation to these two strong leaders for the tremendous progress already made and for their commitment to future progress.

**Q.** Mr. President, what is your reaction to Secretary-General Waldheim's suggestion for a post-Cairo, pre-Geneva Middle East conference at the United Nations or some neutral ground?

**A.** As you know, Secretary-General Waldheim has also agreed to send a high level representative to the conference to be held in Cairo. I don't know yet what position our country will take toward a potential meeting of the United Nations. We have not received any invitation to it.

I noticed in the news this morning that Israel has said that they would not participate, but it is too early for us to decide whether or not we will go to any conference if one is actually held at the United Nations.

**Q.** Mr. President, Egypt and Israel can legitimately deal with themselves, but can Egypt really represent all the other parties when they are not even at the conference, and the Palestinians, who have never had a say in their own political destiny?

**A.** I think that President Sadat in his private communications with me, and even in his public statements, has said that is he trying as best he can to represent the Arab position concerning Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and also the resolution of the Palestinian question.

Obviously, the leaders in Syria, even Jordan, certainly the PLO, have not recognized that Egypt is speaking for them adequately. I think, though, that in his speech to the Knesset, in his follow-up speech to the People's Assembly in Egypt, President Sadat has evoked very clearly the basic Arab position that I have understood in my private conversations with President Assad from Syria, and with the King of Jordan, Hussein.

So I believe that this is an exploratory effort that does accurately represent the basic differences between Israel and all her neighbors, and the fact that Jordan and Syria have not been willing to participate I don't think has dampened President Sadat's commitment or enthusiasm at all. It is constructive, and I think what he discovers in his already completed discussions with Prime Minister Begin and those that might be taking place in Egypt in the middle of next month will certainly be conducive to pursuing the Arab cause.

I think it is constructive because for the first time the Arab position on those controversial issues has been spelled out very clearly for worldwide understanding, and I think the differences that have been faced by us and others for long years are now much more clearly understood by the public. The differences are still sharp. The resolution of those differences is going to be very difficult. I think to the best of his ability, President Sadat is speaking for the Arab world.



**Q.** Mr. President, if the other Arabs refuse, continue to refuse not to sit down with Israel, would the United States oppose it if Egypt and Israel somehow worked out some sort of separate agreement? Would that be a good thing, and what would our position be on that?

**A.** We and Egypt and Israel have all taken the position, publicly, and the same position privately among ourselves, that a separate peace agreement between Egypt and Israel to the exclusion of the other parties is not desirable. This is predicated upon the very viable hope that a comprehensive settlement can be reached among all the parties involved. If at some later date it becomes obvious that Jordan does not want peace, or that Syria does not want peace, or that Lebanon does not want peace in a settlement with Israel, then an alternative might have to be pursued. But we certainly have not reached that point yet.

I think that the other Arab leaders do want peace with Israel. And I am certainly not even considering, and neither is Sadat nor Begin, any assumption that the possibilities for peace have narrowed down to just two nations.

**Q.** Mr. President, there has been criticism of your earlier decision to bring the Soviet Union into the Middle East, a peace negotiating process, and the Soviets have indeed refused to go to Cairo. Would you please explain to the American people why you think it is important that the Soviets be involved in these Middle East peace negotiations?

**A.** The Soviets have been involved in the peace negotiations ever since 1973. The entire Geneva Conference concept was established through the United Nations with the United States and with the Soviet Union as Co-Chairmen. So this has been established now for at least four years. This is a concept that has been adopted and approved by all the parties involved, including the United Nations overwhelmingly perhaps even unanimously.

In the past, I think it is accurate to say that the Soviets have not played a constructive role in many instances because they had espoused almost completely the more adamant Arab position. My own feeling is that in recent months the Soviets have moved toward a much more balanced position, as a prelude to the Geneva Conference.

I wish that the Soviets had decided to go to Cairo. They have decided not to. But we will make as much progress as we can, following the leadership of Sadat and Begin, to make real progress in Cairo with the Soviets not present. And my belief is that the desire of the whole world is so great for peace in the Middle East that the Soviets will follow along and take advantage of any constructive step toward peace.

The fact that we do have differences of opinion is well known, and I don't think is an obstacle to eventual peace in the Middle East. But we did not bring the Soviets in. They have been in since the very initiation of a Geneva Conference.

Do you have a follow-up?

**Q.** Yes, sir. Do you think you can have peace in the Middle East without the Soviets involved?

**A.** Well, I think that we or the Soviets ought to play a constructive role. I think both of us will. We have been the nation then, and I think now, that is uniquely trusted by all the parties involved to act fairly and consistently concerning the Middle East questions. I don't believe that the Soviets occupy that position.

I don't have any doubt that if the nations surrounding Israel can work out an individual peace settlement with Israel leading to peace treaties that the Soviets will play a constructive role certainly at that point. It would be contrary to their own interest to be identified as an obstacle to peace. I don't think they are trying to be an obstacle to peace. Their perspective is just different from ours.

**87. Statement to the General Assembly by Ambassador Herzog on the Palestinian issue, 1 December 1977.**

*In early December, the General Assembly began its discussion of item 30 on the agenda, called the question of Palestine. In his statement, Ambassador Herzog warned the Assembly from discussing the issue using the formulas of the past and being immune from what has taken place in the Middle East in the past two weeks. He castigated the Assembly from being removed from the new reality and being oblivious to the on-going diplomatic activity in the region in the direction of a dialogue. Text:*

Mr. President,

The Middle East stands today at one of the most crucial turning points in its modern history. After four wars and incalculable suffering, we stand, for the first time, on the eve of serious negotiations aimed at resolving the issues that divide us. The bold and imaginative moves of the last two weeks have rendered obsolete the rhetoric and warmongering of the past.

But while the momentum for peace is being maintained in the Middle East itself, this assembly continues in a world of its own. While preparations proceed apace for a constructive dialogue in Cairo in the near future, this body continues to rehash old formulas that do not mention negotiations, but advocate instead an imposed solution in total disregard of the legitimate interests of one of the parties to the conflict.

A challenge has been offered in Jerusalem and Cairo. The time has come for the United Nations to rise to that challenge, to respond to the initiatives taken, and to affirm its commitment to peace and cooperation. If it fails, history will record that when the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt visited Jerusalem and opened the first direct dialogue with Israel after a generation of bloodshed, this Assembly chose not to endorse that initiative, but to continue in its perennial obsession of amassing anti-Israel resolutions.

History will record that when two of the principal parties to the conflict pledged in this forum to leave behind the wars of the past and embark on a fifth struggle, the struggle for peace, this Assembly in its resolutions, allied itself with the forces of war and rejection. If this body does not rise to the challenge, history will record that the General Assembly of the United Nations condemned itself to irrelevance.

When I follow the activities of the so-called Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, whose report we are here asked to consider, I am reminded of the ancient Arabic proverb which proclaims: *"He who has nothing to do acts as a judge."* Here is a Committee, 19 of whose 23 members have no diplomatic relations with Israel, and none of which is a party to the conflict in the Middle East, sitting on the sidelines, prescribing one-sided solutions, while two of the principal parties to the conflict are seriously engaged in opening a constructive dialogue on all issues separating them. The absurdity of that Committee's composition and mandate notwithstanding, we have been presented with a resolution authorizing that body to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations.

I will not go into the report of the Palestine Committee, for its blatant disregard of Israel's own sovereign rights bears no relation to the new era that has dawned in the Mid-

dle East. That era, as typified in the spirit of Jerusalem two weeks ago, will be one of directed dialogue based on mutual respect in which the substantive issues separating us from our neighbours will be resolved, not by sterile speeches, but by face-to-face negotiations.

Not content with the existence of two anti-Israel committees which have already cost the world organization more than half a million dollars annually, they now propose to set up within the Secretariat a special unit whose sole purpose will be to churn out hatred and vilification of Israel. Ironically, the financing of this hostile unit, at a time when the world organization is already experiencing financial difficulties, will be borne primarily by the taxpayers of those nations that have officially welcomed the current moves toward peace, and which contribute well over 60 percent of the budget of the United Nations.

What is more serious is the fact that the establishment of such a unit will seriously prejudice the impartiality of the Secretariat itself. That body, which has a role to play, both in relation to the peace-keeping forces of the Middle East, and in reconvening the Geneva Conference, will lose its standing as an honest broker, and forfeit any positive role it might have played in bringing the parties together.

In addition, we are experiencing a further serious erosion in respect which this body has for itself. When it begins blithely to pass resolutions without considering either the ethical or financial implications contained in them, then it is well on the road both to moral and fiscal bankruptcy. As the Talmud says: *"When one transgresses a commandment and repeats the offence, he feels no further restraint."* Many representatives here had become so accustomed to the extremist resolutions passed here, that they were totally unaware of what these particular resolutions contained. They should not be surprised if the precedent being created here today will soon be followed by special units in the Secretariat for each of the problems currently before the General Assembly. If a special unit on Palestine is set up, why not a unit on Cyprus, on Timor, or on the Comoros Island of Mayotte, to mention but a few?

The proposed special unit will reflect, as does the Palestine Committee, the policy of the PLO, a terrorist organization which compensates for its discredited acts in the Middle East by attempting to build a false image of respectability here. That organization, committed by its covenant to the destruction of the State of Israel, showed its true colours last week when one of its constituent groups threatened to assassinate West Bank Palestinian Arab leaders who accepted an Egyptian invitation to Cairo. Those leaders, it should be recalled, were democratically elected by secret ballot in free elections by the Palestinian Arabs living in the region itself — a distinction which the emigre terrorists of Beirut and Damascus can hardly claim for themselves. Only a few days earlier, the leaders of al-Saiqa, another constituent member of the PLO, threatened openly to kill the President of Egypt. This, in addition to its avowed aim to destroy both Jordan and Israel, is the character of the organization which will direct the activities of the special unit on Palestine to be established within the Secretariat.

Despite the obstacles which this Assembly continues to place in the path of peace, and despite the bitter condemnations heard in this hall, Israel remains ready to enter into immediate negotiations with all its neighbours, with a view to achieving a just and lasting peace.

We urge that the constructive dialogue begun between Egypt and Israel be extended to all parties involved in the conflict.

I repeat here what I said last week and what our Prime Minister has reaffirmed in the

Knesset: In the negotiations that will take place, everything must be negotiable; there are no preconditions.

In this context, Israel is committed, and has always been committed, to a just solution of the Palestinian Arab issue. Such a solution must be sought within the framework of a comprehensive solution to the conflict as a whole. Our position is that the Palestinian Arabs should be represented in negotiations; and in that spirit, the Government of Israel agreed, by unanimous decision of the Cabinet on 11 October, to endorse the working paper prepared with the United States of America, a paper designed to overcome procedural difficulties in regard to the question of Palestinian Arab representation. Clause (3) of that paper stated:

"The West Bank and the Gaza Strip issues will be discussed in a working group to consist of Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Arabs."

The historic changes set in motion by President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem demand a new and courageous approach in regard to all issues if peace is to be achieved in the Middle East. We in Israel accept that challenge, and we appeal to all our neighbours to do likewise. Let the negative tones of "refusal", "rejection", and war become dim echoes of the past.

Let us rather embrace together the spirit of Jerusalem, and face a new future of peace and cooperation, that the words of the prophet Isaiah may be realized:

*"In that day, there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria and the Assyrian will come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. In that day, Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of hosts has blessed saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage'." (Isaiah 19:23-25)*

#### **88. General Assembly Resolution 32/40, the question of Palestine, 2 December 1977.**

*Basing itself on resolutions in favour of a Palestinian state adopted by the Council of Minister of the Organization of African Unity, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the non-aligned countries and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Conference, the General Assembly voted to reaffirm previous resolutions calling for a solution to the Palestinian problem based on their right of return, the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine. This part of the resolution was adopted by 100 in favour, 12 against with 29 abstentions. The second part of the resolution called for the establishment within the UN Secretariat a special unit on Palestinian rights to publicize Palestinian rights. This part of the resolution was adopted by 95 in favour, 20 against with 26 abstentions. Text:*

**The General Assembly,**

**Recalling** its resolutions 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975 and 31/20 of 24 November 1976,

**Having considered** the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,

**Having heard** the statement of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

**Deeply concerned** that no just solution to the problem of Palestine has been achieved and that this problem therefore continues to aggravate the Middle East conflict, of which it is the core, and to endanger international peace and security,

**Reaffirming** that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be established without the achievement, *inter alia*, of a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

**Taking note** of the resolution on the question of Palestine adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its twenty-ninth ordinary session, held at Libreville from 23 June to 3 July 1977,

**Taking note** of the Declaration on the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of non-aligned countries at their extraordinary meeting in New York on 30 September 1977,

**Taking note also** of the final communiqué of the extraordinary meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Islamic Conference, held in New York on 3 October 1977,

1. **Expresses its appreciation** to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People for its efforts in performing the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly;

2. **Takes note** of the report of the Committee and endorses the recommendations contained in paragraphs 43 and 44 of that report;

3. **Notes with satisfaction** that, during the consideration of the report of the Committee by the Security Council at its 2041st meeting, on 27 October 1977, all members of the Council who participated in the discussion reaffirmed that a just and lasting peace in the Middle East could not be established without the achievement, in particular, of a just solution of the problem of Palestine on the basis of the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people;

4. **Urges** the Security Council to take as soon as possible a decision on the recommendations endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 31/20 as a basis for the solution of the problem of Palestine;

5. **Decides** to circulate the report to all the competent bodies of the United Nations and urges them to take necessary action, as appropriate, in accordance with the Committee's programme of implementation;

6. **Requests** the Secretary-General to transmit the reports of the Committee to all conferences on the Middle East held under the auspices of the United Nations, including the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East;

7. **Authorizes** the Committee to continue to exert all efforts to promote the implementation of its recommendations, to send delegations or representatives to international con-

ferences where such representation would be considered by it to be appropriate, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session;

8. **Further requests** the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its tasks, including summary records of its meetings;

9. **Decides** to include the item entitled "Question of Palestine" in the provisional agenda of its thirty-third session.

## B

### **The General Assembly,**

**Having considered** the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,

Noting, in particular, the observations contained in paragraphs 38 to 42 of that report,

**Recognizing** the need for the greatest possible dissemination of information on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and on the efforts of the United Nations to promote the attainment of those rights,

1. **Requests** the Secretary-General to establish within the Secretariat of the United Nations a Special Unit on Palestinian Rights which would:

(a) Prepare, under the guidance of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, studies and publications relating to:

(i) The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people;

(ii) Relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations;

(iii) The activities of the Committee and other United Nations organs, in order to promote the attainment of those rights;

(b) Promote maximum publicity for such studies and publications through all appropriate means;

(c) Organize in consultation with the Committee, commencing in 1978, the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People;

2. **Further requests** the Secretary-General to ensure the full co-operation of the Office of Public Information and other units of the Secretariat in enabling the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights to perform its tasks;

3. **Invites** all Governments and organizations to lend their co-operation to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights on the implementation of the present resolution.

## **89. Statement by Secretary of State Vance, 6 December 1977.**

*Egypt had agreed to postpone the Cairo conference until 14 December in order to enable to United States to discuss the conference with the leaders of the Middle Eastern nations. Secretary Vance announced that he would visit the Middle East in the second week of*

*December. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Begin made an official visit to Britain; Egypt suspended diplomatic relations with Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria and South Yemen in retaliation for their decision to freeze ties with Egypt. On 5 December Libya, Syria, Algeria and South Yemen concluded a five day conference in Tripoli in which they denounced the Egyptian initiative and stated their determination to fight it. In this atmosphere, Secretary Vance explained the nature of the American efforts. Following is his opening statement given at a press conference.*

Before I take your questions, I'd like to make a few opening remarks about the important developments that have been occurring in the Middle East.

The President has already stated the admiration and respect of our government for the leadership of President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin. They have broken through psychological barriers which have impeded progress towards peace in the Middle East for three decades. As a result, an irreversible process has begun. The leader of the largest Arab state has been received in Israel before the eyes of the whole world. This single act has done more than any number of words could to sweep away doubts about the sincerity of both governments in seeking an end to bloodshed and strife.

From the first days of this administration, we — like our predecessors — have sought to get the parties talking directly with each other in serious negotiations. Now these two strong leaders have done just that, leaping over inhibitions of the past and procedural quarrels of the present.

Changes so fundamental inevitably stimulate a variety of reactions. There clearly are now crosscurrents at work — some bringing the parties closer together, some moving them apart. We believe our proper role at this point is to support and reinforce the former while using our relationships across the spectrum to moderate the latter. I will be seeking to do both on my trip to the area.

The President wants to be sure that all the Middle East leaders fully understand that the present Egyptian-Israeli initiatives have our full support, and that they know our support is fully consistent with our continuing dedication to the objective of a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement. We believe that all the parties to the Geneva Conference remain committed to that goal.

President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin have made a breakthrough, and we intend to help them wherever possible to enlarge that opening. They and the other leaders concerned in peace efforts have told us they want us to continue our role. In the past, when there was no movement, our proper role was to take the initiative in stimulating new ways of acting and thinking. Today, when leaders in the area are boldly moving forward, our proper role is to support their progress and help broaden it to all fronts in the continuing search for a final settlement. All the leaders have welcomed my visit, and I look forward to receiving their counsel and their views.

**90. Press conference with Prime Minister Begin and Secretary of State Vance, 11 December 1977.**

*While preparations were being made for the Cairo conference, Israeli experts were drawing up the Israeli peace plan. Secretary of State Vance was in the Middle East for talks with various leaders. He was unsuccessful in persuading the leaders of Syria and Jordan to attend the Cairo conference. President Assad stated flatly that Syria will not be dragged to Cairo. In Israel, the Secretary and Premier Begin held a joint press conference in which Mr. Vance said that progress could be made in Cairo even without unanimity in the Arab world. Excerpts:*

**Mr. Begin:** Before President Sadat arrived in Jerusalem, I sent a cable to the President of the United States in which I said, *inter alia*:

*"People in our country and abroad contend that this is an historic moment. You have created it, Mr. President."*

Tonight I think it is a propitious moment to emphasize the appreciation which we, the Israelis, have for the President, for the Secretary of State, for the Government of United States and for both Houses of Congress.

We are now in the midst of the peacemaking process, making a serious, real effort to achieve and establish peace in the Middle East. I would like to stress that it is the accepted policy of the Governments of the United States, of Israel and of Egypt that our efforts are directed toward a comprehensive peace settlement, without any intention of reaching peace between two countries and signing a bilateral peace treaty, bypassing the other countries. On the contrary, we intend to do our utmost and our best to bring about the establishment of peace and the signing of peace treaties between Israel and all her neighbours, to the south, to the east and to the north.

And, in this effort, we are helped to a very great extent by the Government of the United States, by the President and the Secretary of State.

**Mr. Vance:** Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister, for your very kind words. I bring with me the appreciation, the gratitude and the admiration of President Carter and of all Americans. The leadership which you, Mr. Prime Minister, and President Sadat have given to the movement for peace is something which history will record for generations to come. I am terribly pleased that I am able to be here at this point, to meet with you and to discuss what we can do to help follow the leadership which you and President Sadat have given to the search for peace. I feel that our discussions today, which have been, as always, friendly and fruitful, have helped very much in guiding our steps in a supportive role in the days ahead. So I thank you again, Mr. Prime Minister. on behalf of myself, my colleagues and the President, and I share your hope. I think that there is a chance of moving forward now towards real peace, a true and lasting peace.

At this moment both Syria and Jordan have indicated that they do not intend to participate in the Cairo Conference. That is a decision which each must take as an independent sovereign nation. What the future will hold, I do not think any of us can predict. We hope they will keep an open mind and, as the peace process moves forward, that they will decide to join the peace process. But we must look to them to make that decision.



**Mr. Begin:** I can only express hope that both Syria and Jordan will join in the effort. You remember, in the Knesset, I invited them for the third time, either to come to Jerusalem as President Sadat did or, if they would prefer me to go to see them, I will go any place and meet them. But I understand that this is a part of the American effort now, and therefore the Secretary of State is here and will visit both Amman and Damascus to try, indeed, to convince the leaders of the two countries to join.

**Mr. Vance:** I think that it is possible that these other countries may decide at some point to join the peace process, as the Prime Minister said. All of us hope that this would be the case, and we will continue to urge that they keep an open mind and join the peace process and try and help in achieving the common goal which all of us share, because I do believe that they, too, want peace.

**Mr. Begin:** We are now in the midst of the most delicate negotiations to establish peace after long, protracted years of warfare between the countries. Give those negotiations a chance. And everything is, as I have said time and again, negotiable — except, of course, the destruction of Israel — and everything will be negotiated. But the negotiations will take place in Cairo, in Geneva, in Jerusalem and, with all due respect, not before the camera of our mighty friend, the television.

**Mr. Vance:** We should all like to see unanimity because, the sooner unanimity is achieved, the more rapid the progress will be towards peace. That does not mean, however, that progress cannot be made even though one has less than unanimity. Yes, it is obvious that there has been a split in the Arab world. However, as time moves forward, I think all of us hope and believe that there is a possibility that that split can be healed, can disappear, and that one can find a greater degree of unanimity than there is at the present time. But I think there is a chance for real peace, and we must get started on that course.

**Mr. Begin:** The delegations, both of Egypt and Israel, will deal with the basic principles of the peace treaties to be negotiated, concluded and ultimately signed. And, as you know, under international law there are many chapters and articles, sections and subsections of a peace treaty which are of very great value to the future of any nation which signs such a very important document of international standing and value. And this is going to be discussed in Cairo and, again, I want to stress, it will be a sample for the peace treaties to be signed with all our neighbours. The peacemaking process which is starting now in Cairo under no circumstances will be the end — it will be the beginning of that process which ultimately must bring about the establishment of permanent peace in the Middle East.

The problem of the Palestinian Arabs will be discussed and debated. We do think of it, and I am sure we shall find a solution for this problem.

While in Jerusalem, President Sadat said that, when we start talking directly about peace, he would like to represent, if I may say so, the Arab cause, and we agreed. So I have no doubt whatsoever that, in Cairo, our delegations will talk, not only about the bilateral relations between Egypt and Israel, but also about the problems concerning other countries in the Middle East neighbouring with Israel. I can only imagine that President Sadat will not claim that he can now speak, for instance, on behalf of President Assad, because President Assad doesn't agree to talk with us. So this is a problem, indeed, of the peacemaking process. Let us have patience. If, for the time being, there are those who take a negative attitude, we should be optimistic — it will change, I believe it will change, and they will join in that effort. It is a problem of time. Let us give ourselves some time.

You might have seen, my friend, that we do not go into public polemics about any

statements whatsoever. I think it is a healthy attitude. The real response is negotiations, and negotiations will start on Wednesday in Cairo.

**Mr. Vance:** I have discussed with President Sadat the questions of the divisions that exist within the Arab world. He, like all of us, would like to see those divisions healed and disappear. I will, in my talks with the other Arab leaders, urge them, as we have from the outset, to participate in the peace process. We have said this to them from the moment the Cairo Conference was proposed. They have indicated that they, too, seek the same end objective, namely a comprehensive peace which will settle the questions of the Middle East and, therefore, I will continue to pursue our positions with respect to this and discuss that matter with them.

**Mr. Begin:** I do not agree with the theory that a divided Arab world will help Israel. On the contrary, we believe that we should have peace on all the borders of Israel, and sign peace treaties with all our four neighbours: Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. All four neighbours should live in peace with Israel, and Israel wants to live in peace with them. We do not drive wedges, we do not believe in that famous Latin precept, "*divide et impera*." We do not want to divide and we do not want to rule. We want peace. This is what we believe in.

Tripoli cannot make anybody optimistic. When I spoke about optimism, I meant the trend, the development, the hope to overcome the negation of the Tripolitarians and, of course, it is a most negative phenomenon for the time being. What did they say in Tripoli? No recognition of the State of Israel; no negotiations with Israel; no peace with Israel. Actually, another pronouncement was made, of course. The Soviet Union is behind that negative attitude, which is very regrettable, because the Soviet Union is a great power and is a co-chairman of the Geneva Conference. But this happened, let me say, two weeks ago, and that does not decide the issue. Mankind will march forward. War is avoidable — peace is inevitable. So we shall overcome, with a common effort, that hurdle, too. And Syria and Lebanon and Jordan will join in the peace effort and, ultimately, we shall have peace throughout the region. This is our belief.

**Mr. Vance:** With reference to the Soviet Union — the Soviet Union is a co-chairman of the Geneva Conference. They have a serious responsibility, as we do, as co-chairman. They have said that they intend to discharge that responsibility. I do not want to comment on their motives and, therefore, will not do so.

#### 91. Press conference with Defence Minister Weizman, 14 December 1977.

*On 14 December the Cairo conference opened (see document below); in a surprise move, Prime Minister Begin flew to the United States to present to President Carter Israel's peace plan. On that day, standing for the Prime Minister, Defence Minister Weizman was guest of the editors of the Israeli press. Answering questions about the sudden trip of the Prime Minister, Mr. Weizman said that Mr. Begin wanted to "compare notes" with President Carter on the peacemaking process. Excerpts:*

**Q.** What is your view on a possible American presence in the Middle East?

**A.** The government of Israel will make every effort to attain a peace settlement, and we shall not rule out any methods that can contribute to a settlement. We shall examine

them on their merits. It is my view that the more direct the contacts between ourselves and the Egyptians, the better it will be for our life together. Who would have believed six weeks ago that three Israelis would be sitting in Cairo, talking with three Egyptians at Mena House — without any U.N. personnel between them, though they are in the neighbourhood. But in the past few days we have attained, as a result of President Sadat's visit, something that all circles in Israel strove for throughout the years: Direct contact between ourselves and them. Having said that: We do not rule out — we are ready to examine any possibility and any method which will contribute to the attainment of peace between us.

**Q.** Is Mr. Begin going to present proposals only as regards a settlement with Egypt, or with other countries as well?

**A.** The Prime Minister is taking to President Carter thoughts on various basic salient issues concerning an overall settlement in the Middle East.

**Q.** During the Vance visit, did you sense any return to the step-by-step idea, any retreat from the notion of an overall settlement?

**A.** There is no clear-cut answer to this question. I would venture to say that in my estimation, Secretary of State Vance came here against the background of the storm raised by Sadat. In other words: Had there been no Sadat visit, Vance would not have come. We were happy that he did. He came, among other reasons, more to help in technical matters and to hear views than to inform us of the position of the United States.

**Q.** What was the purpose of the Prime Minister's visit to Washington?

**A.** The Prime Minister left for Washington to compare notes with the President about fruitful ideas that he has about the solution of some problems in the complex in the Middle East — not only the relationship with Egypt and the future peace treaty. He has ideas which he is going to present and see what the reactions of the President of the United States will be.

**Q.** Do you believe that President Sadat is capable of making an agreement with Israel?

**A.** I have no doubt that it is possible to reach a settlement with him (Sadat). Whether you call it a contractual peace treaty with all the trimmings, I am not prepared to say at the moment, but I believe that both he and we have gone so far — and it is a good thing that we have gone so far... that it's difficult to believe that we could go back to the situation that existed before Sadat's visit.

**Q.** Is King Hussein able to detach himself from Syria and reach an agreement with us?

**A.** As for King Hussein, I don't want to hand out marks... in my opinion Hussein made three mistakes: That he attacked us in 1967. That he didn't attack us in '73, and that he didn't join Sadat when Sadat came to Jerusalem. I don't know whether it was a good thing from the Israel point of view — from the Jordanian point of view I expected him to come to Jerusalem and worship together with him in the Mosque on that morning... In his place I would make an effort to join the general effort that is being made at this moment in Mena House... If I may make a recommendation to him from here, from the King David to King Hussein, let him come and join in.

**Q.** Is there any danger of hostilities breaking out with Syria?

**A.** In the political situation now between us and Syria I don't see any impending attack by Israel on Syria — we would have to be almost politically insane... To attack Syria, and if Assad says so, then I think that he is either misjudging the situation or purposely

saying this for some benefit of his own political problem. There is a possibility that there might be (some trouble) from South Lebanon, presently the situation in South Lebanon is favourable.

**Q.** Do you see any prospect of an agreement with Egypt before Geneva?

**A.** I believe that it may be possible to arrive at certain understandings with the Egyptians, but the final, definite agreement will not be reached before Geneva... there will be breakthroughs, exchanges of views, ideas, but at the moment it appears that Geneva will take place.

**Q.** Was Mr. Begin's trip to the U.S. a demonstrative step towards the U.S.?

**A.** Mr. Begin's trip to Washington is not a demonstration. It is a real working trip. ...He went with specific proposals — I am not authorized to tell you at this moment what are the things he will put to the President of the United States, but it is certainly not a demonstrative act towards the United States. It is part of a great, complex and interesting whole. Anyone who thinks that the United States has no part in it and should not have a part in it, in my opinion is mistaken. The United States has something to say, and it should say it. Sometimes, undoubtedly, it can hinder, but sometimes it can give a great deal of help... I can tell you that yesterday we had a long meeting, from half-past-eight in the morning till two in the afternoon, in preparation for the Prime Minister's trip... this is a trip for a definite job, a specific task, with specific ideas, which I hope will have positive and fruitful results.

## **92. Statements at the opening of the Cairo preparatory conference, 14 December 1977.**

*After some delay, the Cairo conference finally was convened on 14 December with the participation of Israel, Egypt, the United States and a representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations. In the opening statements, the representatives of Israel and Egypt reiterated their country's position to do the utmost to reach a comprehensive peace, based among other things, on Resolution 242. Text of the statements by the representatives of Israel, Egypt and the U.S. follows:*

### **ISRAEL/Elijah Ben-Elissar**

Mr. Chairman:

Yesterday my colleagues and I — the delegation of Israel — travelled from Jerusalem to Cairo. It was a unique experience. The flight was brief, but the journey of the spirit was infinite.

Looking down from our aircraft we saw a landscape embracing two ancient lands; two very old peoples; two civilizations; two historic neighbours: Egypt and Israel — names that are as old and as indestructible as the annals of mankind.

From the dawn of history our countries had been neighbours. We have shared common experiences, engaged in mutual commerce, and at times, defended ourselves against common enemies. Indeed, there were times in the past when we were attached by deep alliances.

Tragically we have lately been at war. Now after 30 years of conflict we meet again — Egypt and Israel — this time to begin preparing the peace. We come to renew an age-long

relationship that for too long was interrupted by the nightmare of my own people's exile from its land and by the political and military strife of the last decades since the rebirth of our independence.

May God grant us all the wisdom to succeed in this great human and sacred venture for peace — for our own sakes, for the sake of our peoples, and, above all, for the sake of the generations to come.

Mr. Chairman:

At this time and in this place I wish, on behalf of my delegation, to express sincere appreciation to our host — the Arab Republic of Egypt — for the invitation and hospitality accorded us. We extend our thanks to the President, government and people of Egypt for the manner in which we have been received and for the courtesies extended to us. The facilities placed at our disposal will, I feel sure, contribute — in spirit and in substance — to the purposes of the mission in which we are joined.

People of goodwill everywhere hope and pray for the success of our talks. Our deliberations have consequences that extend far beyond our two countries and our common region. We have to address ourselves to issues that have long awaited a table around which to sit and reason together.

It is this that brings us to Cairo — to talk, to reason and to conduct a dialogue in frankness and in mutual confidence.

If we wish to move from here towards peace nobody else can do the job for us. We, the countries involved in the conflict, can resolve the problems that have to be solved. If there is a lesson to be learned from our long dispute, it is that peace cannot be made by proxy.

It is for this reason that we regret the absence in this city, and from this table, of all those who should be with us today: representatives of Syria, Lebanon and Jordan and an appropriate delegation of Palestinian Arabs.

I declare this because the goal of the Government of Israel is a comprehensive agreement and not a separate agreement. It is a real peace that we seek — peace with all our neighbours, to the south, the east and to the north.

Our goal is now to begin to translate the principles established in Security Council Resolution 242 into all the necessary elements of a peace treaty, namely: termination of the state of war, forever; establishment of diplomatic relations; commerce, international cooperation; use of international waterways; mutual assistance in all fields of national activity. It is proper that these goals be achieved at a reconvened Geneva conference.

The initial building blocks of reconciliation have been laid. Let us resolve to cement them into a firm foundation. Let us resolve that the absence of certain states from these talks will not be permitted to frustrate our sacred common effort for peace.

It is an axiom of our times that the Arab-Israel conflict has lasted too long. Seen in its historic context, it has been a tragic, wasteful and futile conflict. No future war can possibly change the permanent sovereign reality of our region:

The Jewish State of Israel is an integral and permanent part of the regional political reality. Thirty years ago, after having liberated our country from foreign rule in a heroic struggle of the few against the many, our national independence was proclaimed. That act meant the reconstitution of our statehood in the Land of Israel, the land of our forefathers. After two millennia of persecution and, ultimately, physical destruction we were reunited with the Land of Israel and with everything that is precious, sacred and permanent in our national life. The rebirth of Israel was the highest expression of human justice.

I believe that we share an intrinsic common sentiment rooted both in history and con-

temporary experience. In recent times both have had to struggle, fight and sacrifice for our freedom and independence. Since then we have both sought to build a better life for our people.

The eventual peace, cooperation and tranquillity of our ancient nations in our ancient region is as inevitable in the days to come as it was in the days of the past.

The profound vision that we have a common destiny was articulated by a prophet whose name our two faiths cherish. It was Isaiah who said:

*"In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of Hosts has blessed, saying 'blessed be Egypt my people and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage'."*

Let us here renew the mutual pledge that was made in Jerusalem between the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Prime Minister of the State of Israel, the vision of "no more bloodshed." This is the vision we have inherited from our common prophets, for years we have prayed for its realization.

Let us remind ourselves and the world of the Jeffersonian principle: "Enemies in war, in peace, friends." We want peace and we shall be friends.

### **EGYPT/Esmat Abdul-Meguid**

Gentlemen:

On behalf of the government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, I welcome you to the Cairo preparatory meeting for the Geneva Peace Conference. We are gathered here at an historic site which has witnessed 7,000 years of recorded history. Today we sincerely hope that we are witnessing the dawn of a new era for the region and for the whole world. The presence of the representative of the UN, as representing the international community, is of particular significance to our meeting. In point of fact, peoples and governments through the whole world are supporting in earnest our efforts to pave the way for the coming peace conference.

No one can forget that the people in this era in this area have been subjected to untold sorrow and miseries for 30 years. Lives have been sacrificed, blood has been shed. It is therefore high time to seize this opportunity and strive, with vision and a sense of responsibility, towards the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

The Middle East conflict, and its core the Palestinian question, has reached a turning point when President Sadat urged Israel to join efforts for the speedy realization of just and comprehensive peace.

Egypt has launched a new era, an era free from the shackles of narrow-minded concepts and all other forms of psychological complexes. Unnecessary formalities have been sidestepped to open the path for a genuine endeavour to attain peace in conformity with the lofty principles of justice and international law. We have thus clearly proven that we are firmly committed to the establishment of genuine peace.

Let us not forget that peace is indivisible and that the absence of peace, the continuation of a state of no-war-no-peace, is a grave threat to world peace and security. The entire world community therefore earnestly hopes that Egypt's genuine desire to establish a just and lasting peace be reciprocated by the government of Israel.

Tangible and concrete results are expected and should be forthcoming without delay.

The edifice for peace should be established in accordance with international law, the purposes and principles of the UN charter and the relevant UN resolutions, including

Security Council Resolution 242 which lays down the basic framework of the comprehensive settlement.

Actuated by these noble goals, President Sadat called for the convening of this preparatory informal meeting in order to prepare effectively for the Geneva conference so that the parties to the conflict would achieve what the whole world is yearning for.

We trust that the outcome of this meeting will lead to positive and constructive results and that we will all be able to avoid undue delays and unite our efforts to attain the just and comprehensive peace, now that we have transcended barriers of fear and mistrust.

In view of these monumental developments that followed the initiative of Egypt, we trust that we will be able to reach a clear objective and to live up to our peoples expectations and legitimate aspirations.

It is pertinent to emphasize that the invitations which have been extended to the other parties concerned, namely Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, the PLO and USSR are still standing and we do hope that they would participate in this preparatory stage for the Geneva peace conference. Their participation here will be most welcomed.

Before concluding, I wish to recall what President Sadat has said in the Knesset on November 20: "I have come to you on solid ground to build a new life and to establish peace."

Let us demonstrate in the clearest terms that we are determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and that our ultimate goal is the establishment of a comprehensive settlement whereby the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people are fully realized so that peace and justice may prevail once more in the Middle East.

**U.S./Alfred Atherton**

Mr. Chairman:

It is an honour to represent the United States on this historic occasion.

I would like first to extend congratulations to the governments of both Egypt and Israel whose commitment to peace has made it possible for this meeting to convene.

It is a particular pleasure to be sitting at this table today with friends from Egypt and Israel and with Gen. Siilasvuo.

We are ready to do whatever we can to facilitate, support and encourage the negotiations here to prepare the way for the Geneva Middle East peace conference and the achievement of comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East.

For nearly 30 years the Middle East conflict has reaped a terrible harvest of lives, resources and energies of Arabs and Israelis alike. It is true that during this period there have been some steps forward: Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the convening of the Middle East peace conference in Geneva in 1973 and the conclusion of three limited agreements under the auspices of that conference, all testified to the increasing commitment by the parties to the search for a peaceful settlement.

Yet, in spite of this progress, the remaining psychological obstacles have imposed formidable barriers, as the attempt has been made this year to take the logical next step of opening negotiations for a final peace settlement at Geneva.

The momentous events of recent weeks have fundamentally altered that situation and have provided new hope that the objective of an overall settlement can in fact be achieved. With one bold stroke President Sadat has broken through the barrier and imparted new momentum toward peace. With farsightedness and statesmanship, Prime Minister Begin has responded in a manner that makes it clear that Israel, for its part, does not intend to

allow this unique opportunity to be lost. These two strong and creative leaders have brought about a change in attitudes both in Israel and in the Arab countries, and today solutions, a month ago considered unattainable, have been suddenly brought within the realm of possibility.

Today few nations in the world would challenge the proposition that these developments have created a unique opportunity for successful negotiations leading to peace in the Middle East. The idea of peace has captured the imagination and ignited the hopes of a war-weary region. The government leaders who are charged with the responsibility, as well as the challenge of negotiating, can do so with the confidence that there is today an overwhelming public constituency in the region for peace.

All of us in this room would agree that we must not allow the momentum of these events to be lost. President Sadat has called this meeting to prepare for a reconvening of the Geneva conference, the objective of which remains the negotiation, among all the parties to the conflict, of a final peace settlement on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338. I must record my government's regret that others invited to this meeting have felt unable to accept the invitation to attend. Ultimately I believe those absent will see that the process begun here is in their benefit. We are all agreed the door remains open for others to join at any time.

My government — indeed each of the governments represented here — has emphasized on numerous occasions that our objective is the negotiation of a comprehensive peace settlement. Central to my government's policy over the years is the concept that this peace can only be achieved through negotiations between the parties. Security Council Resolution 242 established the principles for those negotiations. Resolution 338, which made a convening of the conference in Geneva possible, established the process. We have always held the view that wherever and whenever the parties can start talking with one another, it is in the spirit of that mandate.

We see the discussions getting under way today in Cairo as an integral reconvening of the Geneva conference and the negotiation of a comprehensive peace. We do not agree that these proceedings are contradictory to the Geneva conference.

In calling for this preparatory meeting, President Sadat has indicated two basic objectives: making progress toward resolving the substantive problems, and overcoming the remaining unresolved procedural obstacles to a Geneva conference. We believe these are realistic and obtainable goals, and that valuable work can be done here. We will do everything we can to help the two parties make progress. It is for them to define in the first instance the subject matter of these discussions, but we will remain available to offer counsel, suggestions, or any other assistance the parties may feel they need.

We are opening these talks at a unique moment. All of us here must not only hope we have reached a turning point in history but also must make our contribution to ensure that it will indeed prove to be a lasting turning point. The leaders of our respective governments — and our peoples — are expecting us to achieve solid results at this meeting and we should not fail them.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I hope you will permit me to indulge in a brief personal reflection. For many years I have laboured, on behalf of my government and with countless colleagues — some of whom have given their lives in the conflict — to help our Arab and Israeli friends find a breakthrough to peace. I have shared and, I think, have acquired some understanding of the agonies both sides experience as they face decisions fateful for the futures of their peoples — and, indeed, for the world. It is a great personal satisfaction



to be part of these talks which hold out so much hope that the long-sought breakthrough has been achieved. The negotiation of deeply-rooted differences involving vital national interests is never a smooth or easy task, and we can expect moments of discouragement. These must and can be overcome, however, if the governments we serve, and we personally, keep before us the vision we all share today of a peaceful and prosperous Middle East. My government is fully dedicated to that vision.

**93. General Assembly Resolution 105 on apartheid policies in South Africa, 14 December 1977.**

*Oblivious to the momentous events in the Middle East, the United Nations General Assembly continued to pass anti-Israel resolutions. The following resolution, which is section D of a resolution called "Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa", is devoted to relations between Israel and South Africa. Of the scores of nations trading with South Africa, Israel alone was singled out to be condemned by the Assembly. This part of the resolution was adopted by 88 in favour, 19 against with 30 abstentions. Text:*

**D**

**Relations between Israel and South Africa**

**The General Assembly,**

**Recalling** its repeated condemnations of the intensification of relations and collaboration by Israel with the racist régime of South Africa in the political, military, economic and other fields, in particular resolution 31/6E of 9 November 1976,

**Taking note** of the special report of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* concerning recent developments in relations between Israel and South Africa,

**Recalling** Security Council resolution 418 (1977) of 4 November 1977,

**Noting with grave anxiety** that Israel has continued further to strengthen its relations with the racist régime of South Africa in defiance of the resolutions of the General Assembly,

**Considering** that the collaboration by Israel has constituted an encouragement to the racist régime of South Africa to persist in its criminal policy of *Apartheid* and is a hostile act against the oppressed people of South Africa and the entire African continent,

1. **Again strongly condemns** Israel for its continuing and increasing collaboration with the racist régime of South Africa;

2. **Demands once again** that Israel desist forthwith from such collaboration and, in particular, terminate all collaboration in the military and nuclear fields;

3. **Requests** the Special Committee against *Apartheid* to keep the matter under constant review and report to the General Assembly and the Security Council as appropriate.

#### 94. Press conference with President Carter, 15 December 1977.

*A day before the arrival in Washington of Prime Minister Begin, President Carter expressed satisfaction with the developments in the Middle East, even though Secretary Vance's trip did not produce all the anticipated results. Mr. Carter also praised the Soviet role as being "constructive", but he admitted that the PLO has been pursuing a negative policy. The Middle East excerpts of the press conference follow:*

**Question:** Mr. President, there are reports that Prime Minister Begin is bringing along some of his peace proposals to discuss with you. My question is, if the United States underwrites peace, will we have a say in terms of what real peace is; if it gives economic aid, psychological aid, security, and so forth? and I have a follow-up.

**The President:** Well, our hope and our goal has been that the nations directly involved in the Middle East crisis, the Middle Eastern disputes, would meet directly with one another and reach agreements that would encompass three basic questions. One is the definition of real peace, genuine peace, predictable peace, relationship among human beings that might transcend the incumbency of any particular leader. I think President Sadat has made a major stride already in the achievement of what is real peace.

The second one is the withdrawal of the Israelis from territory and, at the same time, the assurance that they would have secure borders.

And the third one, of course, is to resolve the Palestinian question. As I have said before, the direct negotiations between Egypt and Israel is a major step forward.

We are attending the Cairo conference and will offer our good services when it is needed. But the basic responsibility will be on the shoulders of the two nations directly involved.

As you know, United Nations observers are also there. Other countries were invited by President Sadat to attend — Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Soviet Union. They have not yet accepted that invitation. We are not trying to define the terms of peace. Anything that is acceptable to Israel and her neighbors will certainly be acceptable to us.

But we are always available, I hope, as a trusted intermediary on occasion to break a deadlock or add a supportive word or in a way to introduce one of those leaders to another and convince the opposite party that each leader is acting in good faith.

I have no idea what proposals, if any, Prime Minister Begin will bring to me tomorrow morning. But he and I will meet privately just the two of us for a while at his request and I will listen to what his report might be and we will be constructive as we have been in the past.

**Question:** Do you have any idea of what the outcome of the Cairo conference will be in terms of goals?

**The President:** I have hopes, but obviously I can't predict what will occur. We have always hoped that even when some of the nations choose not to participate, that the nations who do negotiate could move a major step forward toward an ultimate comprehensive peace settlement.

Both Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat have stated publicly and repeatedly that they are not seeking strictly a bilateral or two-nation agreement. They recognize that an agreement in the Sinai without involving the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, could not be a permanent resolution of territorial differences, and if they ignore the Palesti-

nian question this would still not result in permanent peace, and if the Palestinian question is not addressed, again, it would not be an adequate step toward permanent peace.

So I think, obviously, this is a good first step. I would hope that in Cairo itself, even if the other nations don't choose to attend, that Egypt and Israel can make a major stride toward a comprehensive peace that would at least address in definitive terms the questions that also involve Palestinians, Jordanians, Syrians and Lebanese.

**Question:** I take it from your description of the U.S. role in the Mideast that it is not your intention to endorse specific proposals; that is to say, if Mr. Begin or someone else presents to you what they hope to do, that they would not be able to go back to a peace conference and say, "Jimmy Carter says that this is what he likes."

The President: Well, that is a fairly good assessment. I stay in close touch with most of the Middle Eastern leaders, certainly President Sadat. We exchange communications several times a week. Cy Vance is returning from the Middle East tonight and he will give me a very definitive analysis of the attitude of all the Middle Eastern leaders involved, plus Saudi Arabia, one step removed geographically.

I think I know at least in general terms what would be acceptable to President Sadat, maybe not as a final conclusive agreement, but as an interim step, or major step, toward a final agreement. And if Prime Minister Begin's proposal, in my own personal judgment, is conducive to a step in the right direction and would be acceptable to President Sadat, then I would certainly privately tell him, "This is a very good step." If it should be far short of what I think President Sadat could accept without very serious political consequences and serious disappointment in Egypt, and the rest of the world, I would have no reticence about telling Prime Minister Begin privately, "I just don't think this goes far enough." But I would not be the ultimate judge of whether it would be acceptable to the Egyptians or not. That would be up to President Sadat.

**Question:** Mr. President, may I ask you about the role of the Soviet Union in the Middle East? Do you feel that the Soviet Union in recent months has been in any way helpful in trying to bring peace to the Middle East and how do you regard U.S.-Soviet relations, as we come to the end of this year?

**The President:** I think our relations with them are much better than they were shortly after I became president. I think they have gotten to know me and my attitudes; I think I have gotten to know them and their attitudes much better than before, on S.A.L.T. a comprehensive test ban, the Indian ocean, and many other items.

We have had a very constructive relationship with the Soviet Union which I think is constantly improving. I think the Soviets have been much more constructive in the Middle East than they formerly had.

Obviously, they have not been as constructive as I would like to have seen.

The Soviets, for instance, were invited to attend the Cairo Conference, along with other nations. They were invited by President Sadat. They chose to decline the invitation. I wished that they had accepted. The Syrians have chosen to decline. I have no evidence that the Soviets have had to use their influence on the Syrians to prevent their attendance. I think this was a decision made by President Assad in Syria.

So I would say the Soviets have not been very constructive yet. They have not been nearly as much an obstacle as they apparently were in the past.

Our general relationships with the Soviets are very good and my hope is that they will continue to cooperate in the future when we go past Cairo toward an ultimate Geneva Conference. I was well-pleased with the joint Soviet and American statement. Although it

is not a definitive solution, obviously, it has no obstacles in it which would prevent an ultimate resolution of the Middle East differences.

So I would say it is a mixed assessment. In general, though, they could have been much worse.

**Question:** Mr. President, your preference for a general or comprehensive settlement in the Middle East is quite understandable, one that could be endorsed by all the interested parties. But I wonder if you think, in light of what has happened since President Sadat's visit, since many people feel that Israel has no real worries about a one-time war, that if an agreement, formal or informal, even a real warming takes place between Israel and Egypt, that you could have de facto peace in the Middle East, perhaps not as neat and wrapped up as a treaty, that would be a major accomplishment in itself? And do you think that it may have to come to that as a result of President Assad's opposition to the talks and the PLO?

**The President:** Well, our immediate hope and goal is that any peace move made by Israel and Egypt would be acceptable to the moderate Arab leaders in the Middle East, certainly King Hussein in Jordan, certainly the Saudi Arabians. We have had good indications in my personal visits with President Assad that he wants to resolve the differences. Lebanon is heavily influenced, as you know by Syrian presence. The PLO have been completely negative. They have not been cooperative at all.

In spite of my own indirect invitation to them and the direct invitations by Sadat and by Assad, by King Hussein, by King Khalid in Saudi Arabia, the PLO have refused to make any move toward a peaceful attitude. They have completely rejected United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338. They have refused to make a public acknowledgement that Israel has a right to exist, to exist in peace. So I think they have, themselves, removed the PLO from any immediate prospect of participation in a peace discussion.

But I certainly would not ascribe that sort of intransigence or negative attitude toward any of the other parties who have been mentioned as possible participants. We want to be sure that at least moderate Palestinians are included in the discussions. And this is an attitude that is mirrored not only by myself but also by Prime Minister Begin, President Sadat and others. So I think they are all major steps, already having been taken, to delineate those who are immediately eager to conclude a step toward peace — those like President Assad who will wait a while to see what does occur, see if the Golan Heights question can be resolved and so forth, and those who have in effect removed themselves from serious consideration like the PLO.

#### **95. General Assembly Resolution 32/147 on measures to prevent international terrorism, 16 December 1977.**

*For a number of years Israel led the campaign in the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other appropriate international forums to fight terror. The end result of these efforts were discussions on the issue and an attempt to pass a meaningful resolution against this pernicious international phenomena. But the resolution adopted by the Assembly was self-defeating because of the insertion, at Arab and Soviet insistence, of article 3 that reaffirmed the right to self-determination and independence of all peoples under colonial and racist regimes, and upheld the struggle of national liberation movements, thus in effect*

*sanctifying the use of terror by any group that could call itself a national liberation movement. The resolution was adopted by 91 in favour, 9 against with 28 abstentions. Text:*

**The General Assembly,**

**Deeply perturbed** over acts of international terrorism which are occurring with increasing frequency and which take a toll of innocent human lives.

**Recognizing** the importance of international co-operation in devising measures effectively to prevent their occurrence and of studying their underlying causes with a view to finding just and peaceful solutions as quickly as possible.

**Recalling** the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

**Taking note** of the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on International Terrorism.

**Deeply convinced** of the importance to mankind of the continuation of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee.

1. **Expresses deep concern** over increasing acts of international terrorism which endanger or take innocent human lives or jeopardize fundamental freedoms;

2. **Urges** States to continue to seek just and peaceful solutions to the underlying causes which give rise to such acts of violence;

3. **Reaffirms** the inalienable right to self-determination and independence of all peoples under colonial and racist regimes and other forms of alien domination, and upholds the legitimacy of their struggle, in particular the struggle of national liberation movements, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the organs of the United Nations.

4. **Condemns** the continuation of repressive and terrorist acts by colonial, racist and alien régimes in denying peoples their legitimate right to self-determination and independence and other human rights and fundamental freedom;

5. **Appeals** to States which have not yet done so to examine the possibility of becoming parties to the existing international conventions which relate to various aspects of the problem of international terrorism;

6. **Invites** States to take all appropriate measures at the national level with a view to the speedy and final elimination of the problem, bearing in mind the provisions of paragraph 3 above;

7. **Invites** the *Ad Hoc* Committee on International Terrorism to continue its work in accordance with the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly under resolution 3034 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, first by studying the underlying causes of terrorism and then by recommending practical measures to combat terrorism;

8. **Invites** the States which have not yet done so to submit their observations and concrete proposals as soon as possible to the Secretary-General so as to enable the *Ad Hoc* Committee to carry out its mandate more efficiently;

9. **Requests** the Secretary-General to transmit to the *Ad Hoc* Committee an analytical study of the observations of States submitted under paragraph 8 above;

10. **Requests** the *Ad Hoc* Committee to consider the observations of States under paragraph 8 above and to submit its report with recommendations for possible co-operation for the speedy elimination of the problem, bearing in mind the provisions of paragraph 3, to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth sessions;

11. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide the *Ad Hoc* Committee with the necessary facilities and services, including summary records of its meetings;

12. **Decides** to include the item in the provisional agenda of its thirty-fourth session.

*Prime Minister Begin and President Carter held talks in the White House on 16 and 17 December. The focus of their discussion was the Israeli peace plan. The plan was called by the President a fair basis for negotiations. Secretary Vance termed it constructive and imaginative. At Mr. Begin's request, the United States arranged for him to meet with President Sadat in order to discuss the position of Israel on all issues. This summit was scheduled later for 25 December at Ismailiya. Appearing on C.B.S. television programme "Face The Nation" Mr. Begin expressed his satisfaction with the talks he held with the President. Excerpts:*

**George Herman:** ...Has President Carter supported or endorsed in any way your proposals? Has he put the US Government behind your proposals?

**Prime Minister Begin:** I found good will and understanding by President Carter, who has contributed decisively to those dramatic events which now make peace possible in the Middle East. I did not ask for any commitment by the President. What I was interested in, as in what I believe President Sadat is interested, was the good will of the US. That we got. Therefore, if I came here a hopeful man, I'm leaving a happy man.

**Herman:** If I understand your first answer, you come here to explain your proposal to the President.

**Begin:** That's true. And I think we had very fruitful, very constructive talks. The main question raised concerned what is going to happen with the Palestinian Arabs. I cannot go into details of our discussions, because the first man to hear from me now will be President Sadat. But I can say that our proposal entails the possibility, for the first time in history, of the Palestinian Arabs having self-rule and the Palestinian Jews security. Both are vital.

**William Beecher:** Can you tell us whether President Carter asked you to reconsider any of your basic proposals before they are presented to President Sadat?

**Begin:** He did not. I can say that he considers the proposals which I brought to him a fair basis for negotiation to achieve peace.

**Marvin Kalb:** Does he support them, Sir?

**Begin:** Well, if he says they are a fair basis, there is some support for them. And I think that is the position now of both the President and the Secretary of State, Mr. Vance, who yesterday made a public statement to this effect, saying that my proposals are constructive and conducive to peace.

**Herman:** Didn't they also say that additional steps would be necessary, that this doesn't go all the way?

**Begin:** No. Additional steps were mentioned because we are now at the time of very delicate negotiations. We have actually started negotiations directly face-to-face. There are very complicated problems to solve. Therefore, the American endorsement could not be complete, of course. There will be many problems. For instance, we want a comprehensive peace settlement. We never initiated, we do not initiate today, a separate peace agreement with Egypt. We want peace agreements and treaties with all our neighbours, to the north, to the south and to the east. For the time being, Jordan has not joined our effort, and Syria even opposes that effort. We believe that they will come in. But it is a very serious problem. These are the additional steps to be undertaken.

**Kalb:** Could you tell us, Sir, what does autonomous self-rule mean?

**Begin:** It means what it says — self-rule. In other words, the people will have the possibility to conduct their own affairs through their own elected men.

**Herman:** Even if they elect Yasser Arafat?

**Begin:** Well, I don't think they will elect particularly that man. But, of course, no negotiations between Israel and the so-called PLO can take place... Of course, we cannot know whom they are going to elect. But I do believe that those who have a completely negative attitude, a destructive attitude, will not be elected. I don't think they will be candidates.

**Beecher:** If something like this formula should be negotiated, would you exclude the possibility that, after years of Israel and the residents of the West Bank living harmoniously together, a separate nation would emerge there?

**Begin:** No, on the contrary. I think we shall live together in Judea and Samaria and in the Gaza district. This is our striving all the time.

**Beecher:** But would you see this arrangement in perpetuity, with the possibility of a nation emerging there?

**Begin:** There can always be a review. But I wouldn't like to go into detail, because as I said, the first man to hear from me should be President Sadat.

**Herman:** Have you had any direct or indirect contact with President Sadat recently?

**Begin:** We have permanent contact through the American Ambassador. I sent President Sadat a message before I left for Washington, informing him about my journey to the US and about the talks to take place between President Carter and myself. Nothing was done behind his back. He knows perfectly well what is going on, and then, I will be going to Egypt to meet with President Sadat in order to inform him about the contents of our talks in Washington, and also, of course, bringing our ideas concerning the peace-making process.

**Herman:** Have you contacted any other Arab governments, either indirectly or directly?

**Begin:** No.

**Kalb:** Is there a difference, Sir, between your concept of an autonomous region on the West Bank and a homeland such as President Carter suggested many months ago?

**Begin:** Anybody can choose his own language. I prefer to say "autonomy," in Greek; translated into English is "self-rule" — a very good translation. But why should you call it "West Bank"? The West Bank is the whole territory from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean. I think the proper language is Judea and Samaria.

**Kalb:** Does self-rule also mean self-determination?

**Begin:** I think one can say they are synonymous.

**Beecher:** Mr. Begin, when you're in Egypt, talking to President Sadat, do you think that there'll be some agreement that will actually come out of your brief visit there on this next trip?

**Begin:** I hope so. And I have a suggestion to make to President Sadat. This I can publish in advance. If President Carter should invite President Sadat and myself to come to Washington, then we shall be in a circle of friendship and faith — a Christian President, a Moslem leader and a Jewish Prime Minister — and we can announce to the world *Pax Vobiscum, Shalom Aleichem, Salem Aleicum* — all of which mean "Peace unto you." I think it will be quite an event in the annals of Mankind, in our generation.

**Kalb:** Is the peace that you speak of a peace for all the Middle East?

**Begin:** Yes, Sir. This is our striving.

**Kalb:** And would you seek a declaration of principles that would be applied in the negotiations between Israel-Egypt, Israel-Syria, Israel-Jordan?

**Begin:** That will be part of the negotiation with the President of Egypt, because the President wants, of course, to have a peace treaty on the basis of bilateral relations between Egypt and Israel. But he also told me that he represents the Arab cause, and that he would like to see a solution to the problem of the Palestinian Arabs. I'm going to propose such a solution to him. And then we shall negotiate. If, as I said, we reach an agreement, then let us announce it to the world.

**Herman:** One of the crucial emotional issues in this whole question seems to me to be the question of East Jerusalem. When President Sadat spoke before the Knesset, he talked about Jerusalem as an open city. When I questioned him on "Face the Nation" a few weeks ago, I said: "How about East Jerusalem?" And as you may know, he said: "For sure, under Arab control." Now, if he feels so strongly about it, and if the Saudi Arabians feel so strongly about the Arab holy places in East Jerusalem, what is your concept of what will eventually happen to East Jerusalem?

**Begin:** Would you accept the principle that I feel strongly about Jerusalem?

**Herman:** Certainly. That's why I'm asking you.

**Begin:** Well, Jerusalem is and has been, the capital city not only of our State, but of the Jewish People for three thousand years, since the days of King David.

**Herman:** And a major stumbling block to peace, perhaps?

**Begin:** No, no; it's not going to be a stumbling block at all. On the contrary, it is the city of peace. As I said in the presence of President Sadat, London is a city, Paris is a city, Cairo is a city. They are not going to be divided; why should Jerusalem be divided? Nobody in his senses would suggest that barbed wire should again divide this city into two parts. Jerusalem is one city, the capital city of our State and of our People, with completely free access to all the holy shrines of every religion, Moslem, Jewish and Christian, as President Sadat himself learned when he visited Jerusalem. He went to the el-Aqsa Mosque to pray with complete freedom, and then he went to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. And he saw how there was completely free access to all the holy shrines. That had not been the case for nineteen years under Jordanian rule. We, for instance, the Jews, could not go to the Western Wall of our Temple, destroyed by the Romans. For nineteen years, we could not go to that holy shrine to pray. Now, everybody can go to his holy shrine. We will, perhaps, have a proposal about self-rule of the religious representatives of their holy shrines, and that is a very positive and constructive solution for everybody concerned.

**Beecher:** Let's pursue the security issue. We understand your desire that any and all peace agreements stand on their own feet, without dependence on outside guarantees, assurances or commitments. Have you, on this recent trip, discussed with President Carter the possibility of a mutual security treaty with the United States?

**Begin:** No, we didn't discuss it at all. About guarantees, I would like to say that, in the whole world, there is no guarantee that can guarantee an international guarantee. We have the experience of Czechoslovakia in 1938, the tripartite declaration regarding the Middle East which never prevented any war, a declaration that the international community will never tolerate the closing of the Tiran Straits. Again they were closed; nobody moved. We had to fight not only for the freedom of navigation, but for our survival. Therefore, we do not rely on guarantees; we do not ask for guarantees. We can sustain our own independence, and we shall.



The question of a security pact between the US and Israel is a question to be dealt with as sovereign states should do, without connection with the peace-making process. If the US should find it necessary or possible to suggest a security pact between itself and Israel, we shall be very willing to consider it.

**Herman:** In this new mood of negotiating, this new momentum towards peace, is everything negotiable with other countries, for example, the Golan Heights with Syria?

**Begin:** We always said that everything is negotiable, except the destruction of Israel. Everything is negotiable.

**Beecher:** I'm trying to get some notion of an outside role once you will have succeeded in negotiating peace agreements with your neighbours. Do you see the possibility, the usefulness, of American and Russian monitors in demilitarized zones — whether in the Sinai, on the Golan Heights or the West Bank?

**Begin:** There are now Americans in Sinai, as you know. There are no Russians. I don't think we would like to have them, either President Sadat or myself, either the People of Egypt or the People of Israel. We have some experience with the Russians. Whenever they come, it's not so easy to ask them to leave. And there is now an international problem. We would not like to have the Russians in our region at all.

**Kalb:** Could you tell us, Sir, whether your policy is still to encourage Jewish settlements on the West Bank, even within the framework of self-rule?

**Begin:** I don't have to encourage them. There are settlements. It's the perfect right of the Jewish People to settle in Judea and Samaria, and it will be the right of the Arabs in Judea and Samaria to settle in Israel. There will be symmetrical justice. Everybody will be free to settle. There will be free movement.

**Kalb:** But supposing within a framework of an autonomous region, homeland, whatever it is to be called, the leadership of the Palestinian Arabs says "We don't want Jewish settlements?"

**Begin:** Well, why shouldn't Jews and Arabs live together all over the country? We have Arabs in Jaffa, in Haifa, in Lydda, in Ramla. And there may be Jews in any place in Judea and Samaria. These are the tenets of cooperation, of living together. I think everybody will understand it. I don't think it will ever be a problem.

**Herman:** Mr. Prime Minister, how do you evaluate the role of the Cairo meeting?

**Begin:** Well, I think it is a very useful conference. Our friends met with their Egyptian counterparts. They were received, by the way, with the warmest hospitality possible. This, too, is part of the peace-making process: coming together, liquidating prejudice, seeing each other, seeing that we can live together, work together and make peace together.

**97. General Assembly Resolution 32/171 living conditions of the Palestinian people, 19 December 1977.**

*In another patently anti-Israeli resolution, the majority of the General Assembly again reaffirmed that all Israeli measures in the territories under its administration are illegal. It called upon all states and international organizations not to cooperate, recognize or assist Israel in any way to exploit the resources of the administered areas. The resolution was adopted by 109 in favour, 3 against with 26 abstentions. Text:*

### **The General Assembly,**

**Recalling** the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, 1976, and the relevant recommendations for national action adopted by Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver from 31 May to 11 June 1976,

**Recalling also** resolution 3 on living conditions of the Palestinians in occupied territories, as contained in the recommendations of the Conference for international co-operation, and Economic and Social Council resolution 2100 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977,

**Recalling** General Assembly resolution 31/110 of 16 December 1976,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and expresses the view that there is need for further analysis in order to meet fully the objectives of General Assembly resolution 31/110;

2. **Requests** therefore the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East and the Economic Commission for Western Asia to prepare and to submit to the General Assembly at its 33rd session a comprehensive report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

3. **Requests** the Secretary General in preparing the above mentioned report to consult and to cooperate with the Palestine Liberation Organization the representative of the Palestinian people.

4. **Urges** all states to cooperate with the Secretary General in the preparation of the report.

### **98. Remarks by Prime Minister Begin at Ben-Gurion airport upon his return from the U.S. 20 December 1977.**

*On his way back to Israel from Washington, Prime Minister Begin stopped for few hours in England to brief Prime Minister Callaghan of his peace plan. He also met with a special representative of France's President Valerie Giscard d'Estaing to inform the French government of Israel's proposals. Returning to Israel, Mr. Begin announced that he would be leaving for Ismailiya on 25 December. On 20 December, Defence Minister Weizman flew to Egypt for talks with War Minister Gamasy and the next day with President Sadat. Text of Mr. Begin's remarks:*

**P.M.:** I brought a good plan with me from Israel to America and what I am bringing back with me from the U.S. to Israel is good news.

Our plan has won powerful support from the U.S., from the President, who stated that it would be a fair basis for peace negotiations, from the President and his advisers — the Secretary of state and others, as well as Senator Humphrey — that committed friend of Israel — and Senators Jackson, Stone, Javits — the leaders of the Republican party in the Senate, and by the majority of the House of Representatives, as well as from the former President of the United States, Mr. Gerald Ford, and the former Secretary of State, Dr. Kissinger.

As to the Jewish community, the Chairman of the Union of Presidents, Rabbi Dr. Schindler told me, after studying the plan, that, once it was publicised, it would get the support of ninety-five per cent of the Jewish community.

I held talks at Chequers with Mr. Callaghan, the British Prime Minister, and he is about to issue a statement today to the effect that our proposals are a fair basis for negotiations for peace, leading to peace. Mr. Francois Poncet was sent to London by the French President, and I met him too at Chequers. We shall learn what the French position is within the coming days.

I shall ask for a cabinet session to be convened on Thursday and for the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee to convene on Friday. On Sunday I shall leave for Ismailiya in order to meet President Sadat.

The visit will be a working visit. It is not the return visit to Cairo with a speech before the Egyptian Parliament that was promised to me by the President of Egypt and that according to what he told me will take place.

I would like to point out that our programme is not secret, that everything will be published in good time, both from the rostrum of the Knesset and before the public. The problem with publication is one of timing. I could not very well have come to the President of the United States with a programme that he had already read in the press before my arrival in Washington. Similarly, it would be unthinkable to go to Ismailiya with a plan that President Sadat had already read through one of the news agencies or newspapers. It's a problem of human dignity, of tact.

That is why we have not yet published the plan. There are rumours about it as well as misunderstandings that will be dispelled within a very short time, once all the details of the plan are made known to the public.

We are now keeping up the fast pace of the negotiations: They are bound to be fast because this is the propitious time for peace making in the Middle East.

There is no longer any doubt that both Egypt and Israel want and are interested in getting peace.

We seek an overall peace in the Middle East, not only with Egypt but also with our other neighbours. This will not be foiled even if peace treaties are signed one after another with certain time intervals, provided only it is clear that if, for example, Egypt proposes signing a peace treaty before we come to negotiate with Syria — that this will not mean the end of the process but rather its beginning and that in the wake of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, peace treaties are signed with Israel's other neighbours. It is the intention and aim of the two states — Egypt and Israel — that an overall Middle East peace be attained.

On Sunday, Christmas day, I shall be leaving for Ismailiya, but I have enquired of members of the U.S. government as well as those of Britain and France what the Christians' attitude would be to the fact that President Sadat and I meet on Christmas day, and they all said that this would be an excellent thing if it was the effort for peace that was being promoted on Christmas day.

**99. Remarks by Prime Minister Begin at Ben-Gurion airport prior to his departure for Ismailiya, 25 December 1977.**

*Speaking to the press the Prime Minister said that the Israeli peace plan has been described as fair by the leaders of the United States and Britain. Those who saw it felt it*

*was a good base for negotiations with Egypt. Mr. Begin stressed the fact that the negotiations would be conducted between equals, without any threats or dictates. With him in the negotiating team were the Defence and Foreign Ministers, the Attorney General and senior aids. This marked the first time that an Israeli Prime Minister visited an Arab state openly for the purpose of negotiating a peace treaty. Text:*

Good morning friends. The Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, the Defence Minister Ezer Weizman and our colleagues are setting out for Egypt, for Ismailiya, to meet the President of Egypt Anwar Sadat, and his advisers and helpers — our hearts filled with confidence and faith.

We are bringing with us an Israeli peace plan which has been described by all who have seen it as being fundamentally and in essence — fair. That is the evaluation of the President of the United States, the Vice-President of the U.S., U.S. President's National Security Adviser, our dear friend the Secretary of State, Mr. Vance, the distinguished and well-known Senators — Jackson, Javits, Stone and Humphrey, the House majority leader Wright, the former President of the U.S., Mr. Ford, the former Secretary of State Dr. Kissinger, many media personalities in the United States who influence its public opinion, the decisive majority of our brethren — the great Jewish community of the United States, of the British Prime Minister, Mr. Callaghan, and of the British Foreign Secretary Dr. Owen. All who have seen this programme evaluate it as a fair and good base for conducting negotiations for the signature of a peace treaty between ourselves and Egypt, and as a first step towards attaining an overall peace in the Middle East.

With a heart filled with faith — for this reason: We believe that this is the opportune moment for attaining peace in our region, in order to prevent wars, to avert suffering, mourning and bereavement among our two ancient peoples of great cultures, who have contributed so much to all of humanity.

Upon our departure for Egypt — we do not have the slightest vestige of a complex of grandeur. We respect the Egyptian people and great Arab people. We respect the distinguished President of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, but nor do we have any vestige of an inferiority complex. We represent an ancient people that has seen a great deal, suffered a great deal, and fought a great deal for its right to return to the Land of Israel, the Land of our forefathers, to live in it as a free people throughout the generations.

Thus we are leaving for Egypt to conduct negotiations as between equals, for a peace treaty. There are no victors and there are no vanquished, there is no complex either of superiority or of inferiority, there are no threats and no dictates. We respect the principles in which President Sadat believes, and we expect him to respect the principles in which we believe. Only mutual respect for principles and the mutual desire to make peace can bring about peace.

I call upon you, people of Israel, to pray for the success of the mission and the path that we are about to tread for the sake of our people and our country, for our children and not only for this generation but also for the generations to come. "Shalom" and "Le'hitraot" tonight or tomorrow.

#### **100. Letter from President Katzir to President Sadat, 24 December 1977.**

*Prime Minister Begin took with him to the Ismailiya summit a letter to President Sadat from President Katzir, in which the President of Israel extended his best wishes to the two*

*leaders and wished them success in their deliberations for the common goal — peace.*

His Excellency

The President of The Arab Republic of Egypt

Mr. Mohammad Anwar Al-Sadat

Ismailiya

Your Excellency.

With the arrival in Egypt of the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Menahem Begin, at your invitation, to continue the talks in the effort to advance the cause of peace between our countries, I hereby extend to you my sincerest best wishes for the success of your deliberations.

You, Mr. President, and the Prime Minister, have been vouchsafed a great and unique opportunity to transform our region from a battlefield strewn with sacrifice into a flourishing garden of development that will bring prosperity and progress to our nations.

For the sake of our peoples, and for the future of the young generations of Egypt and of Israel — whose youth you were happy to meet during your historic visit to Jerusalem — I share the confidence that you, Mr. President, and the Prime Minister of Israel, will make every effort to ensure that the talks will, indeed, be crowned with success and that, as a result, a new and glorious chapter will unfold in the relations between your great people and mine.

With warmest greetings and expressions of deep respect,

Yours sincerely,  
Ephraim Katzir

#### **101. Statements and joint press conference Begin-Sadat in Ismailiya, 26 December 1977.**

*Almost at the beginning of the Ismailiya summit, agreement was reached between Mr. Begin and Mr. Sadat on the convening of joint military and political committees, the first to meet in Cairo, the second in Jerusalem, with rotating chairmen, to deal with the major issues. But when discussion began of these issues, difficulties arose and the conference was extended by another day. On 26 December, the two leaders appeared before the press to read statements and to answer questions. Mr. Begin described the talks as very good and said he was leaving Egypt a happy man. In replies to questions it became clear that the future of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the Palestinian issues were the major problems to be resolved. Following is the text of the statements and replies to questions:*

##### **Sadat's statement:**

In the name of God, let me seize this opportunity to express my gratitude for the efforts you have done to cover the historical moments here in Ismailiya. As you know, after my visit to Jerusalem on the 20th of November, a new spirit prevails in the area and we have agreed in Jerusalem and in Ismailiya also to continue our efforts towards achieving a comprehensive settlement.

We have agreed upon raising the level of the representation in the Cairo conference to ministerial level and as you have heard yesterday (Sunday) we have agreed upon two committees — a political committee and a military committee headed by ministers of foreign

affairs and ministers of defence. The military committee will convene in Cairo. The political committee will convene in Jerusalem.

Those committees shall work in the context of the Cairo conference, meaning that they will report to the plenary whenever they reach any decision. The question of the withdrawal we have made progress, but on the Palestinian question, which we consider the core and crux of the problem here in this area, the Egyptian and Israeli delegations here discussed the Palestinian problem.

The position of Egypt is that on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip a Palestinian state should be established. The position of Israel is that Palestinian Arabs in Judea, Samaria, the West Bank of Jordan, and the Gaza Strip should enjoy self rule.

We have agreed that because we have differed on the issue, the issue will be discussed in the political committee of the Cairo preparatory conference.

I hope I have given you some light upon our work and thank you again.

### **Begin's statement:**

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. I have come here a hopeful prime minister and I am leaving a happy man. The conference in Ismailiya has been successful. We will continue with the momentum of the peace-making process.

Now starts the phase of the most serious negotiations — how to establish peace between Egypt and Israel as part of a comprehensive settlement throughout the Middle East. These two days are very good days for Egypt, Israel and for peace.

May I express our gratitude to the president for his gracious hospitality he bestowed upon me, upon my friends and colleagues, the Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and the Defence Minister Ezer Weizman and our collaborators and advisers.

This is the second meeting between President Sadat and myself after the historic event of his breakthrough visit to Jerusalem.

Here, too, may I say, we spoke as friends. We want to establish real peace. There are problems to discuss and in these two committees, the chairmanship of which we will rotate between our respective ministers, those serious negotiations and talks will take place.

Now my friends and I will leave Ismailiya and Egypt with the faith that we contributed to the peace-making process and there is hope that, with God's help, President Sadat and I and our friends will establish peace.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

### **News conference**

**Q.** Mr. Begin, what are the advantages of two or three committees working in tandem rather than a cohesive peace forum and since you and President Sadat obviously coordinated these discussions, do you expect to meet soon and frequently?

**Begin:** The committees will start with their work quite soon. In the first week of January they will work every day. We hope for good and concrete results. President Sadat and I also agreed during our private talks, if necessary, from time to time we shall meet again.

**Q.** Mr. Begin and Mr. Sadat, would you say Egypt and Israel are about to achieve a peace treaty in a couple of months?

**Sadat:** We are working towards a comprehensive settlement. As I said before, we

want to establish peace in the area. Without a comprehensive settlement we can't achieve peace.

**Begin:** I agree with the President.

**Q.** To Begin: What about the declaration of intention you were both to announce? And how do the proposals you submitted to President Carter differ from those you brought here?

**Begin:** The statement made by the President is an agreed upon statement. So we don't need now an additional written declaration. We agreed to continue the efforts to establish a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 242 and 338 and to establish these committees. This is the basic agreement. This is the most important development at the Ismailiya conference.

Our colleagues and friends will continue with the efforts as the president and I explained. We have presented to President Sadat the proposals I took to President Carter. There were a few amendments not of decisive importance. And yesterday at the conference I presented all our proposals in detail. The president listened very attentively and now the committees may have counter-proposals by Egypt as is natural in the process of negotiating peace treaties.

**Q.** Looking beyond a peace settlement, can you tell us something about your long-term grand designs for peace? How to satisfy your people's expectations of a better life, of a renaissance in this Middle East cradle of civilization? Are you in favour of cooperation in science, education, agriculture, industry, trade and cultural exchanges between your two countries and eventually between Israel and the Arab world as a whole?

**Sadat:** Well, the two committees will start, and, as I said, will report to the plenary. Let me say this — we are working towards a comprehensive settlement in the area here and the nature of peace is on the agenda between both sides of the two committees, and all that you have mentioned will be discussed in the committees.

**Begin:** May I congratulate you, Mr. Carr on the poetry you read to us and I think this is a very good vision and when we establish peace, all those good things you put into your question will be put into realization.

**Q.** Mr. President, is the gap on the Palestinians unbridgeable?

**Sadat:** In as much as we shall be continuing in the Cairo conference to discuss whatever points of difference between us, we shall continue. As Prime Minister Begin has said, if need be we shall meet again. I don't think there is any gap that cannot be bridged between us.

**Q.** President, do you agree that Egypt not only holds the key to peace in the Middle East, but also that no combination of Arab countries can wage war in the foreseeable future against Israel?

**Sadat:** Well, maybe you have heard my speech. We were sincere in war and we are sincere for peace since my visit to Jerusalem last November. Let us sit together like civilized people and discuss whatever problem between us. Let us agree upon the fact that the October war should be the last war. We did not differ upon this at all. The continuation of our efforts will answer all this.

**Q.** What about waging war without Egypt?

**Sadat:** Well, we have here, for sure, in the Arab world, in this area here, the key to war and peace. In Egypt here, this is a fact, an historic fact. Well, I can't speak for anyone but I can say this.

**Q.** Mr. President, can the West Bank Palestinian issue be solved without a role for the PLO?

**Sadat:** There should be a solution for this problem. We have passed it to the political committee that we have agreed upon in the Cairo conference. For sure, we shall find a solution. Because, as I have said before, the Palestinian question is the crux of the whole problem. Maybe in the future, after the political committee works and the discussions start, a new situation will develop.

**Begin:** The organization called the PLO is bent on the destruction of Israel. It is written in their charter. They never changed their position. As I stated time and again, from our point of view everything is negotiable except the destruction of Israel. Therefore, this organization is no partner to our negotiations. Now as I read before I reached Ismailiya, the spokesman of this organization threatened the life of President Sadat — speaking about one bullet that may change the course of events. So now we have a situation, after Tripoli, in which such threats are issued both against Israel and Egypt. We want to discuss the problem of the Palestinian Arabs with our Egyptian friends. We want to negotiate with the representatives of the Palestinian Arabs and this we are going to do in the first week of January.

**Q.** Is there any possibility that other Arab countries will join the conference? Will you keep King Hussein of Jordan informed?

**Sadat:** For sure I will be informing King Hussein of all the developments that have taken place here in Ismailiya and let us hope that others will join yet in the next stage.

**Q.** In view of the dramatic changes that have taken place, have you, Mr. President, changed your mind about delaying diplomatic relations for future generations?

**Sadat:** As I have said before, the nature of peace is one of the important points that is on the agenda for the two committees and for the plenary session after that. Let me tell you this — it is now not more than 35 or 40 days since my visit to Jerusalem. Everything has changed. Everything has changed since that visit took place. I quite agree with those who say that the world after the Jerusalem visit is completely different to the world before the visit.

**Q.** Seven years ago the U.S. and China started ping-pong diplomacy. Will you open the borders to allow sportsmen of both sides, even at this stage, and in that way to allow people to know each other and play together? The Egyptian football team — which I'm told is better than Israel's — could play the Israel team.

**Sadat:** It is not yet ripe. But for sure we shall be continuing our discussions in our meetings. As you have heard, there will be a committee here and a committee there and gradually we shall be in a position to reach agreement upon all what you are proposing here.

**Begin:** Until the day the president agrees to exchange sportsmen on both sides, do something to strengthen our football team (laughter).

**Q.** Mr. President, in view of the disagreement on the Palestinians, can an interim accord be reached between Egypt and Israel?

**Sadat:** The differences should be overcome in the committees. It is a fact.

**Q.** You are not seeking an alternative to peace?

**Sadat:** As I have already stated before the Knesset, this time we are not either for a disengagement agreement or a partial agreement — trying to reach some stages and then postponing other steps after that. No. This time we are for peace. Genuine peace. Comprehensive settlement.



**Begin:** May I add, Mrs. Zemer, the President and I agreed that there is no alternative to peace.

**Q.** How do you explain the abrupt change from years of enmity and distrust to friendliness and trust?

**Sadat:** It is not abrupt. It must have been in the subconscious of all of us and when I made my step, in my calculation, really, I knew my people would agree to it. But I never thought that they would go to this extent. It is a natural feeling and there is no fear at all. There will be no revival of anything that has happened in the past.

**Q.** Mr. President, Mr. Begin, have you reached the stage where mutual troop reductions in the Sinai are possible?

**Sadat:** Let us hope that in a few weeks we shall be in a position to report.

**Begin:** Yes. Yes. We hope so. When peace comes on, both countries, all countries, in the Middle East will be able to reduce their military forces and expenditure which is eating up our substance and rather devote our sources and resources to the liquidation of poverty, development of agriculture and industry. This is our common aim.

**Q.** I was asking about troop reduction at this stage.

**Begin:** We do hope for the possibility of reducing troops from all sides.

**Q.** On what moral grounds, Mr. Begin, are you denying the Palestinians, the West Bank and Gaza their right to self-determination? And you, Mr. President, on what moral grounds can you negotiate about the future of the Palestinians without a single Palestinian representative present?

**Begin:** One correction, my friend. I belong to the Palestinian people too. Because I am a Palestinian Jew and there are Palestinian Arabs. But, of course, we want to live in human dignity, in liberty, justice and equality of rights. Therefore, I brought the president a proposal of self-rule for the first time in the history of the Palestinian Arabs. Now we have established a political committee. We stated our positions clearly and the political committee will continue the discussion of this very serious problem.

**Sadat:** What we are discussing really is within the Arab strategy that was agreed upon in the Arab summit conference. But in the details I shall not negotiate for the Palestinians. So they should take their share. But in this Arab strategy, what I am doing really is that I am not speaking for myself but for this strategy in its principles. But I shall not put myself as a spokesman for them or speak for them. They should join in the next stage.

**Q.** Is Israel's demand for a military presence in the West Bank a major stumbling block?

**Sadat:** I do not want to reveal what we have already discussed in the proposals that have been made by Prime Minister Begin. He has shown his will to end the military government on the West Bank. But we differ upon the issue, as I have told you, of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. That means self-determination.

**Q.** Did you discuss the future of the Golan Heights?

**Sadat:** I cannot speak for Syria or the Golan Heights, as I told you, now we are concerned with the main principles in the Arab strategy. And whenever we reach agreement upon those points between us in the committees, in the political and military committees, after that everyone should negotiate for himself.

**Begin:** I do want to express the hope that President (Hafez) Assad (of Syria) will join our common effort. We want a comprehensive peace treaty. We want peace with all our neighbours to the south, to the north and to the east and when President Assad agrees to

negotiate with us, we will be willing to negotiate with him. This is a problem of the northern border of Israel and the common border of Israel and Syria.

**Q.** I am an Egyptian journalist and I want to ask Mr. Begin in his language.

**Begin:** You want to speak to me in Hebrew? I understand Hebrew (laughter).

**Q.** (in Hebrew) Mr. Prime Minister, I want to ask you if the initiative of President Sadat brought about profound changes in your thinking and outlook, and also how you see the future of Israel and the Middle East after peace.

**Begin:** (in Hebrew) Firstly, I want to tell you, you speak better Hebrew than I do. (In English, addressing Sadat) I want you to know he speaks better Hebrew than I do (laughter). Congratulations. No, I want to answer. I thank you for your question. (In Hebrew) I want to say that the visit of President Sadat to Jerusalem was a visit of historic significance, for the whole Israeli people, for the whole Egyptian people, for all the peoples, and we appreciate it. Since the visit we have worked well on a peace plan, and I brought this peace plan before the president, and we explained it in detail yesterday in the joint meeting, when we were alone, and when the two delegations met.

The future of Israel after peace is achieved, as in the case of Egypt — I have no doubt, it will be glorious and that peace will be achieved between the peoples, the Middle East will develop, and as his majesty, the King of Morocco has said, it can become a sort of paradise on earth. This is the cradle of human civilization and from here came the tidings of peace and progress. Therefore, I was very happy to hear your question and that is my answer. Now I shall translate into English with a Hebrew accent. (Begin then translated his remarks in English).

**Q.** Now that you have raised the level of the talks, how do you see the role of the U.S.? Will you be inviting Secretary of State Vance to take part in some of your talks and is there a role for the Soviet Union?

**Sadat:** I foresee for the U.S. and the U.N. in the political committee (inaudible) but the military committee will be bilateral, as for the U.S., it will be in the political committee without the Soviet Union. We didn't exclude them. They excluded themselves. Well, we have no objection from our side.

**Q.** Mr. President, will you call an Arab summit, and will the other parties be invited to the Cairo conference when the level is upgraded?

**Sadat:** Until we reach in the committee agreement on the main issues and mainly the Palestinian issue, on which we have differed — until we reach this point, as it is part of our Arab strategy, I shall not be in a position to ask for an Arab summit meeting. But whenever we reach this, I think that after that, I shall be in a position to discuss with my Arab colleagues the possibility of a summit.

**Q.** Do you feel that Mr. Begin's proposals contain sufficient concessions to have justified your trip to Jerusalem?

**Sadat:** Well, we have agreed on certain points. We have made progress on the withdrawal. We have differed among us on certain points, namely the Palestinian question. These proposals that have been made by Premier Begin will be put before the committee, political or military, and other counter-proposals will be submitted to these committees, and until we reach them we think that the momentum that we have given to the peace process is continuing.

**Q.** What do you think of Begin's proposals?

**Sadat:** Well, as I have told you, we have points of difference and points of agreement.

**Q.** Can you be more specific on what progress was made on Sinai? And does this mean foreign ministers exclusively in the Cairo conference?

**Sadat:** I have stated before that in the political committee there will be the foreign ministers, and in the military committee there will be the defence ministers. For the first part that you have asked, I have heard the proposals Premier Begin told us about and we are preparing our counter-proposal in the military committee. But really what concerns us in this respect is a comprehensive settlement. This is not the Sinai that is the problem now, because as I told you, after peace, after a genuine peace in the area, regarding Sinai, this is a side issue and, of course, in a comprehensive settlement it will be part of it. And as I told you, I prefer not to reveal anything, and leave the military committee to work on the details and discuss proposals and counter-proposals until we reach agreement.

**Q.** Mr. President, what about the PLO? Don't you feel the Palestinians have the right to choose their representatives? What role do you think the PLO should play in the peace-making process?

**Sadat:** I have stated before the Knesset that the Palestinians should be a part of the settlement because, as I said, the Palestinian question is the core of the whole problem. The PLO is now in the rejection camp. I sent them an invitation and they refused and excluded themselves. Well, I didn't exclude them. For the future, let us wait for what will develop.

**Q.** Mr. President, is it still your position that Israel must withdraw from all occupied land, including East Jerusalem?

**Sadat:** That's right.

**Q.** When you speak of progress on the question of withdrawal, may I ask Mr. Begin how he interprets that progress?

**Begin:** Well, Resolution 242 does not commit Israel to total withdrawal, and therefore this matter is a matter for negotiation, to establish those secure and recognized boundaries which are mentioned in the second paragraph of Resolution 242. And this is the crux of our problem — to negotiate the conditions of peace in order to establish peace throughout the Middle East. This is what we are going to do in the next few weeks and months.

**Q.** Will Syria eventually join the talks, and what would be the effect?

**Sadat:** I can't answer this. You should ask President Assad. I can't speak for him, as I told you whenever they find it convenient for them to join, we shall welcome them.

**Q.** Will the Cairo conference reconvene simultaneously with the two ministerial committees? Or alternately?

**Sadat:** It has always been my position that without good preparation, Geneva will be a failure. I said this during my visit last April in the U.S. I made my first proposal for a working group under Vance to start contacting all the parties concerned and a meeting to be prepared before Geneva.

**Q.** But what about simultaneous meetings of the two committees?

**Sadat:** They will be working in the context of the Cairo conference, and as I said, they will report to the plenary.

**Q.** Does this mean the Cairo conference will continue on the foreign minister level, that Mr. Vance and Mr. Waldheim will come here?

**Sadat:** Let us hope so. But for sure, we shall not go back. We are going forward.

**Q.** But the political committee is meeting in Jerusalem. Does this mean that Mr. Vance and Mr. Waldheim will also be in Jerusalem?

**Sadat:** Well, we shall leave this to them.

**Q.** Mr. Begin, do you accept the principle of non-acquisition of territory by force and are you going to apply it to a comprehensive settlement?

**Begin:** Yes, we are for a comprehensive settlement and I accept the principle established under law attesting that there mustn't be any acquisition of territory in the wake of a war of aggression. The war of the Six Days was a war of legitimate self-defence, and the president told me yesterday, yes, he does remember the slogans issued in those days to throw the Israelis into the sea, and so we defended ourselves in accordance with international law and practice. Thank you.

**102. Press conference with Prime Minister Begin at Ben-Gurion airport upon his return from Ismailiya, 26 December 1977.**

*Describing the Ismailiya summit as a meeting crowned with success, the Prime Minister repeated what he said in Ismailiya and added some details concerning the coming moves in the peacemaking process between Israel and Egypt. He also explained the reason why a joint communique was not issued and instead each leader read his own statement. The main reason had to do with differences of opinion over the Palestinian issue. Text:*

**Prime Minister:** Ladies and Gentlemen, citizens of Israel: if, as I requested, you prayed for our success, your prayers were heard. The meeting at Ismailiya between the Egyptian delegation and the Israeli delegation, between President Sadat and his advisers and the Defence Minister, the Foreign Minister and myself — that meeting was crowned with success.

Yesterday, immediately after our arrival in Ismailiya, I held a personal talk with President Sadat, and within a few minutes we agreed to set up two committees: One political, the other military. We thus lent added momentum to the peace-making process in the Middle East. We agreed that the two committees would be chaired by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries and the Defence Ministers of the two countries. We agreed that one committee — the political committee — would sit in Jerusalem, and the military committee in Cairo. That is a just division. We also agreed that the chairmanship of the committees would be on a rotating basis: In Cairo, in the first week of the discussions, General Gamasy — whom we respect as a courageous soldier — will lead off, and after a week Defence Minister Ezer Weizman — whom the Egyptians respect as a courageous soldier — will take over. In Jerusalem, the political committee will be chaired first by the Foreign Minister, and after a week the new Foreign Minister of Egypt will take over as chairman. (By the way, we were present at the swearing-in of the new Foreign Minister.)

These committees will start working in mid-January, probably on the 14th or the 15th of January. We have set no date for the conclusion of their work, but it may be expected that they will work for between two and three months. We hope they will bring us an agreement.

If there is an agreement it will serve as the basis for the peace treaties.

There was a proposal that we issue a joint declaration, and we discussed that proposal. Many things were agreed upon. But what was not agreed upon, as regards content and formulation, had to do with the Palestinian Arabs. An Egyptian formulation — which we could not accept — was presented to us, and we put forth our own formulation, and the Egyptians could not accept it. For several hours we discussed how to find a joint formulation, and last night between 10 and 10:30 P.M., we had not yet attained the agreed and

joint formulation. We therefore decided to put off the session until this morning, out of the assumption that, after the night, following further thought, we would, as regards this matter too, find a formulation acceptable to both sides, but it emerged that the differences of opinion on this matter are fundamental, as everyone knows. The Egyptians propose establishing a Palestinian State in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. We unreservedly reject such a proposal — and not just us: The United States of America also unreservedly rejects the idea of establishing a Palestinian State in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and other factors also reject its establishment, and the Egyptians did not accept our proposal that the solution be found in self-rule, or, in its Hebrew — actually Greek — version, administrative autonomy.

Well, when you don't find a joint formulation, you must look for the accepted path, on the basis of the precedents in the international conferences, to wit: Each side will determine its stand, according to its content and in its own terminology. And following consultation by the Israeli delegation, we agreed that we would present such a formulation to President Sadat — and he accepted it without hesitation, on the spot. Thus did we overcome that point past which it was, ostensibly, impossible to move, and we proposed the following formulation, which expresses the stands of the two sides: "The Egyptian and the Israeli delegations discussed the Palestinian problem. The Egyptian position is that in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip a Palestinian State should be established. The Israeli position is that the Palestinian Arabs residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district should enjoy self-rule, and this issue will be discussed in the political committee." At the press conference — which you no doubt watched — President Sadat read out both parts and both formulations of this statement, as they were accepted.

We may now sum up, that the momentum is continuing. In another three weeks or so serious negotiations will open in two working committees, one in Cairo and one in Jerusalem, at Ministerial level, and these committees will submit their conclusions and their recommendations. Hence I was able to say, at the press conference in Ismailiya, "I have come a hopeful Prime Minister and I am leaving a happy man." There is a basis for this feeling.

Ladies and Gentlemen, only a few months ago this entire development would have seemed to me utterly fantastic: The meetings in Jerusalem and in Ismailiya between President Sadat and myself, between the Foreign Ministers, between the Defence Ministers, in a very friendly, warm atmosphere, of hospitality, of understanding, with mutual assurance that we would continue to see each other and together seek a way to establish peace. Of course there are differences: no one will ignore them. But the mutual desire is to overcome them, bridge them, and reach peace. And there is indeed good hope that, God willing, we shall attain that peace quickly — and those are the tidings I bring from the meeting in Ismailiya with President Sadat.

**Q.** How can the difference between Israel and Egypt over the Palestinian Arabs be bridged, and if the issue cannot be resolved, could this lead to no agreement being signed between Israel and Egypt?

**PM.** Why be a doomster? According to our tales, everything should have a good ending. We are entering negotiations. There are differences between us. We shall talk, discuss. We are holding to our view, they are holding to their view. All discussions on peace treaties in international life began with differences. How do the Sabras put it? "Give it a chance."

**Q.** What was President Sadat's reaction to the Cabinet-approved peace plan, and did he accept it as a basis for negotiation?

**PM.** Yes. A proposal for negotiations, and the Egyptians will submit a counter-proposal, and thus we will have two papers, and the committees will discuss the various proposals with the aim of attaining an agreement.

**Q.** Was there no first reaction by President Sadat?

**PM.** There was.

**Q.** And what was it, please?

**PM.** A basis for negotiations.

**Q.** Is there any timetable for narrowing the existing gaps?

**PM.** There is no timetable, there is no time-limit. The committees will begin their discussions in about another three weeks. I assume that this discussion will go on for several months.

**Q.** What is the form of the self-rule you are offering the Palestinians of the West Bank, and could you provide us with details?

**PM.** No, I can't now. But there will be a debate in the Knesset on Wednesday morning: You are invited to attend. It is my duty first of all to give the detailed plan to our parliament.

**Q.** Can you explain to us how a people can be given self-rule and not be allowed their own form of government, state and constitution?

**PM.** This is a philosophical question.

**Q.** Could there be a separate Israeli-Egyptian agreement if no other Arab states join in the discussions?

**PM.** It is too soon to put a question like that. It was put to President Sadat at the press conference. He said "No, peace must be established throughout the Middle East," and I agree with him.

**Q.** Has there been any achievement as regards content, or only on procedure — and if only on procedure, how does that stand against your statement in Ismailiya concerning an achievement?

**PM.** The distinction between procedure and content is sometimes an artificial one. What we agreed on is content, very important content: That we are setting up two committees, chaired by Ministers, and we will discuss all the questions according to the plan presented by Israel. Therefore it is not correct to say that it is procedure. It is an arrangement of profound significance. And as to the substance of the talks, I have already explained: There is now an Israeli peace plan. Egypt may present its own peace plan, and the two papers will serve as a basis for the discussions between the two delegations in the committees.

**Q.** Since President Carter spoke by phone with President Sadat, and you spoke with President Sadat, is there any basis for thinking that King Hussein will soon be joining the talks?

**PM.** In the first place, we did not speak with President Carter — neither President Sadat nor myself. We waited together for fifteen minutes for the telephone to start working, but the call didn't come, so we had to return to the conference discussions. We later received greetings from President Carter — to President Sadat and to myself. He wishes us, at Christmas, success in our discussions for peace. Of course both of us, President Sadat and myself, wanted to thank the President of the United States, and the message, as I have said, was for the two of us. I hope that this evening I will be able to speak by phone from Jerusalem to Washington, or to Plains — we shall find out where the President is — and give him a first, or preliminary, report on our talks. I shall also be calling the Prime

Minister of Britain, to inform him, too, about the discussions and their results. As to Jordan and King Hussein, President Sadat could not speak in his name. We both hope King Hussein will join in the effort to make peace. The President of the United States will be meeting with King Hussein in Teheran in another week, and he will no doubt exert his influence on the King to join it. I hope and wish he succeeds.

**Q.** Did your visit to Egypt have a substantive result, or was it made to prevent a crisis in the talks?

**PM.** No. It was planned. After we prepared our peace plan, we decided, in the Ministerial committee on Defence, that I would first of all bring it to the knowledge of the President of the United States, and immediately thereafter I would propose to President Sadat that a meeting be held between the two of us in Egypt. And that is exactly how things occurred, on the basis of our calculated initiative. First I went to Washington, I presented our peace plan to the President of the United States and his advisers — and they regarded it positively, saying it was a fair basis for negotiations on peace. From the U.S., I requested those who help us arrange such meetings to look into when I could meet with President Sadat. There were various proposals: Thursday, and then also Monday. The truth is that from the beginning I did not want to go to Ismailiya precisely on Christmas, but President Sadat asked the Americans to inform me that Monday was no good for him because Tuesday the German Chancellor was arriving and he would be busy with him and in addition certain preparations had to be made on Monday. He proposed that we meet in Ismailiya on Sunday. And that is how the meeting was agreed on, so as to present to him, too, our plan for the establishment of peace. We had intended to return home last night, but because we entered into the debate on the Palestinian Arabs, and by evening had not yet found a solution as to how to formulate this subject, we agreed that we should sleep over in Ismailiya, and in the morning we would no doubt find the formulation, as it would be decided upon. And that is in fact what happened.

There was in recent weeks no crisis in the relations between ourselves and Egypt. Rather, there was a process, which began with a visit to Washington, continued with a visit to London, and ended — for the present — with a visit to Ismailiya. All the visits were good.

**Q.** If there is a Knesset vote, will you impose party and coalition discipline, or will everyone be allowed to vote according to his conscience?

**PM.** We shall impose no coalition discipline. Every Knesset member will be able to vote according to his conscience. I hope that this decision, concerning the government supporters, will have an effect also on those opposing the government, namely: This time, because one of the most fundamental issues in our national life is involved, all the factions will allow their members to vote freely.

**Q.** What do you have to say about the hard criticism of your plan levelled by Gush Emunim and residents of the Rafah salient?

**PM.** All due respect to the criticism: The plan is a good one.

**Q.** Was there any agreement on having the P.L.O. participate in any form at all in the talks?

**PM.** No. The President was asked, and replied that the P.L.O. had excluded itself from the cycle of the negotiations, while I replied: As far as we are concerned, everything is negotiable — except Israel's destruction. And since that organization decided and wrote that it seeks the destruction of Israel, it cannot be a party to the negotiations. This I said in the presence of the President of Egypt.

**Q.** Did you and President Sadat reach agreement on possible demilitarization in Sinai?

**PM.** Our proposals concerning Sinai are crystallized. True, there is in them an element of demilitarization, but that is one of the details, and we shall hold all the negotiations on the details — and on the minutiae — in the military working committee.

**Q.** What is the present plan for the Cairo conference plenum?

**PM.** The Cairo conference will convene tomorrow and will decide to defer its discussions so as to enable the working committees in Cairo and Jerusalem do their work.

**Q.** Did President Sadat make any evaluations concerning the possibility that the rest of the Arab States would join in the talks?

**PM.** Yes, we both hope they will join, but President Sadat stressed that he could not speak on their behalf: He speaks in Egypt's name.

**Q.** What is the nature of the relations formed between yourself and President Sadat?

**PM.** Very good, cordial relations. We call each other "Friend," and this is an important asset.

**Q.** Was the question of Jerusalem discussed, and -

**PM.** No.

**Q.** Did you reach any agreement on arrangements?

**PM.** If I said no, what arrangements could we have worked out?

### **103. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin presenting Israel's peace plan, 28 December 1977.**

*Two days after his return from Ismailiya, the Prime Minister finally unveiled the Israeli peace plan in a statement to the Knesset. He discussed at length the proposed arrangements for both Sinai, to be restored to Egyptian sovereignty, with various security measures for Israel, and the self-rule plan for the Gaza, Judea and Samaria regions. After a 12 hour debate, the Knesset approved the peace plan by 64 votes in favour, 8 against with 40 abstentions. Text of the statement, the self-rule plan and points of reply by the Prime Minister to the Knesset debate follow:*

Mr. Speaker, Member of the Knesset.

On the establishment of peace we shall propose to grant administrative self-rule to the Arab residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District on the basis of the following

(Mr. Begin then read out the plan for self-rule for Judea, Samaria and Gaza — see below).

Mr. Speaker, I must now explain paragraph 11 of this plan and also paragraph 24. In paragraph 11 of our plan we stated that security and public order in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District will be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities. Without this paragraph the plan for administrative self-rule is meaningless. I wish to state from the Knesset rostrum that it obviously includes the stationing of Israel army forces in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. It is quite out of the question — if we had been asked to withdraw our army forces from Judea, Samaria and Gaza — to allow these areas to be dominated by the murderers' organization known as the PLO — "Ashaf" in Hebrew translation. This is the vilest organization of murderers in history, with the exception of the



Nazi armed organizations. A few days ago it also boasted of the murder of Hamdi el-Kadi, the deputy director of the education office in Ramallah, and today it threatens to solve the problems of the Middle East by one bullet to be dispatched to the heart of Egyptian President Sadat, as its predecessors did in the Al-Aksa Mosque against King Abdullah — with one bullet. No wonder the Egyptian government announced that if one such bullet is fired Egypt will reply with a million bullets.

We want to say that this organization will not be permitted, under any conditions, to dominate Judea, Samaria and Gaza. If we did withdraw our forces, that is what would happen. And therefore let it be known that anyone who wants an agreement with us should be good enough to accept our statement that the Israel Defence Forces will be stationed in Judea, Samaria and Gaza; and there will also be other security arrangements so that we shall give all the residents — Jews and Arabs in the Land of Israel — security of life, that is, security for all.

In paragraph 24 we stated:

*“Israel stands by its right and its claim of sovereignty to Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. In the knowledge that other claims exist, it proposes, for the sake of the agreement of the peace, that the question of sovereignty in these areas be left open.”*

We explained this to U.S. President Carter and to Egyptian President Sadat. We have a right and a claim of sovereignty to these areas of the Land of Israel. This is our country, and it belongs by right to the Jewish people. We want agreement and peace. We know that there are at least two other claims of sovereignty over these areas. If there is a mutual will to achieve an agreement and bring about peace, what is the way? If these conflicting claims are upheld and if there is no solution to the conflict between them, there can be no agreement between the parties. And for this reason, to facilitate agreement and to make peace, there is only one way: to decide, by agreement, that the question of sovereignty remains open; and to deal with the people, the nations — for the Palestinian Arabs, administrative self-rule; and for the Palestinian Jews, real security. This is the fairness contained in the proposal, and thus it has also been received abroad.

With this plan, as well as with principles which I shall now explain, for the settlement of relations between Israel and Egypt to be laid down in a peace treaty between these two countries, I went to the United States to visit President Carter and to inform him of both parts of our peace plan. The second part — namely, the principles for the settlement of the relations between Egypt and Israel in the context of a peace treaty — are:

- \* Demilitarization — The Egyptian army shall not cross the Gidi-Mitla line. Between the Suez Canal and this line the agreement for the thinning out of forces shall remain in force.

- \* Jewish settlements shall remain in place. These settlements will be linked with Israel's administration and courts. They will be protected by an Israeli force — and I repeat this sentence for a reason well known to all the members of the House — they will be protected by an Israeli force.

- \* A transition period of a number of years, during which IDF forces will be stationed on a defensive line in central Sinai, and airfields and early-warning installations will be maintained, until the withdrawal of our forces to the international boundary.

- \* Guarantee of freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran, which will be recognized by both countries in a special declaration as an international waterway which must be open to all passage of all ships under any flag; either by a UN force which cannot be withdrawn ex-

cept with the agreement of both countries and by unanimous decision of the Security Council, or by joint Egyptian-Israeli patrols.

With the two parts of this peace plan I came to the President of the United States, Mr. Carter. I had a personal tête-a-tête with him. Both during that talk and in the talks between the Israeli and American delegations, he expressed a favourable assessment of the plan. On Saturday evening, at the second meeting, the President of the United States said that this plan was a fair basis for peace negotiations. A favourable view of our plan was also expressed by Vice-President Mondale; Secretary of State Vance; the President's adviser on national security, Prof. Brzezinski; as well as by the well-known, distinguished and influential Senators Jackson, Case, Javits, Stone and our dear friend — to whom, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire Knesset of Israel I today extend best wishes for a full and speedy recovery — Senator Humphrey. In addition, a favourable assessment of this plan was expressed by former U.S. President Gerald Ford, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and the spokesman of the American Jewish community, Rabbi Dr. Schindler. All of them stated that the basis of the plan was its fairness.

From America, en route home, I stopped over in London, and I presented our two-part peace plan to the Prime Minister of Britain and the British Foreign Secretary. Both Mr. Callaghan and Dr. Owen expressed their favourable assessment of our peace plan, and Mr. Callaghan told our Attorney-General that this was a very constructive plan. I also conveyed the plan to the special envoy of the President of the French Republic, Giscard d'Estaing, namely Francois Poncet.

While I was in the U.S., I asked the Secretary of State to contact President Sadat and to inform him, on my behalf, that I would like to meet with him — whether in Cairo or in a neutral place, or, should he so desire, in Ismailiya. I mentioned a meeting in Ismailiya because we spoke of such a possibility with President Sadat when he visited Jerusalem.

The President of Egypt informed me, via the Secretary of State, that he was choosing Ismailiya as the site of our meeting. I agreed. Thus, a few days after the conclusion of my mission in the U.S. and Britain, the meeting in Ismailiya took place.

Mr. Speaker, that was a successful meeting. Its success came with its opening. We held a personal talk, President Sadat and myself; and within the first five minutes of that talk, the decisive result was attained: continuation of the negotiations between the two countries for the signing of a peace treaty — as was decided, instead of the expression "peace agreement," in the meeting between the two delegations in Ismailiya.

These negotiations will be conducted at a high level. The committees will be: political, to sit in Jerusalem, and military, which will sit in Cairo. The chairman of the committees will be the foreign ministers and the defence ministers of Egypt and Israel. The chairmanship of the committees will rotate. Our Foreign Minister will begin at the sessions of the committee in Jerusalem. The Egyptian defence minister will begin at the sessions of the military committee in Cairo. At the end of a week, the chairmen will rotate. The political committee will deal with the civilian settlements in the Sinai Peninsula and the subject — which is a moral one, it may be termed an Arab-Jewish one — of the Palestinian Arabs. The military committee will deal with all the military questions connected with the peace treaty for the Sinai Peninsula.

Thus Mr. Speaker, for the first time in 30 years, in the very near future — in about another two weeks — direct, face-to-face negotiations will commence between authorized representatives — ministers of Israel — and Egypt's authorized representatives, its foreign and defence ministers. No third person will serve as chairman of these

committees, as was the custom in all the meetings between ourselves and the Arab states; but the ministers themselves will conduct the sessions and rotate as chairmen. These will be fundamental, detailed, political, security negotiations for the attainment and signing of peace treaties.

And because this is happening for the first time since the establishment of our state, for the first time after five wars, for the first time after the declaration from various directions that Israel must be liquidated — we must welcome this shift in itself. And let us hope and wish that during the weeks or months during which the committees will sit, they will reach agreement — and if there is an agreement it will serve as a basis for the peace treaty which, in this case, will be signed by authorized representatives of Israel and Egypt.

It may be said that at the Ismailiya meeting the two sides also agreed on a joint declaration. But its publication was prevented because the two delegations did not arrive at an agreed and joint formula for the problem which we term — and justly so — the question of the Palestinian Arabs, while the Egyptians call it, in their terminology — and it is their right to use their terminology — the question of the Palestinian people. We tried, we made an effort, to arrive at a joint formula; but it emerged that we could not accept one or another wording — whether proposed to the Egyptian delegation by us, or whether proposed to the Israeli delegation by the Egyptians. On Sunday, between 10 and 10.30 p.m., we therefore postponed the meeting until Monday morning, on the assumption that, with an effort by both sides, a way out would be found. And, indeed, it was found.

By way of agreement on a joint formula, in accordance with precedents in international conferences, we proposed — and our proposal was accepted — that each side would assert its position and employ its own terminology. Hence, the statement on the question of the Palestinian Arabs, as read out by the President of Egypt to our joint press conference, was made up of two sections, namely:

*"The position of Egypt is that a Palestinian state should be established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The position of Israel is that the Palestinian Arabs residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district should enjoy self-rule."*

Because of the difference over this issue, publication was prevented of the declaration whose contents had been completely agreed upon. We did not deem it proper to press for publication of a joint statement if the Egyptian side said that under these conditions it could not sign it. But I must note that the content itself was agreed upon by the two delegations together. (Interjection by Knesset Member Aharon Yadlin, of the Alignment: What is left of the contents?) If it was not published, why do so from the Knesset rostrum? (Interjection by Knesset Member Yadlin: How can settlements be defended by an Israeli force if the IDF withdraws to the international border?) That belongs to the debate — and I have learned, especially from committee proceedings — that if someone says he does not understand, he means he does not agree — particularly someone as intelligent as yourself.

Mr. Speaker, with the conclusions of the meeting at Ismailiya, we have done our part; we have given our share. Henceforth, the other side has the floor. For the sake of peace, for the sake of a peace treaty, we have assumed great responsibility and taken many risks. Yes, indeed. And already during these days, since my return from the U.S., a hard and painful debate has been under way between my best friends and myself. From the Knesset rostrum, too, I shall state, as I told them, that if it is my lot to conduct such a debate, I shall willingly accept the decree. They are my friends. We went a long way together, in

difficult days and in good days. I love them, and regard them — and shall continue to regard them — with affection.

But there is no escape. You must accept responsibility with that degree of civic courage without which there can be no political decisions. To me it is clear that we are on the right path to facilitate negotiations for, and the signing of, a peace treaty. After examining all the other ways, as they have often been mentioned in Knesset debates, I no longer have the slightest doubt that the only way to make negotiations for the signing of a peace treaty possible is the one that is proposed by the government. Therefore, should it be necessary to face a debate on this matter with dear, even beloved, friends, we shall do so. But it is a fact that the responsibility is great and the risks exist. Therefore I reiterate: In Ismailiya, in the wake of the visits to Washington and London, we, the government of Israel, did our part, we made our contribution; and it is now the turn of the other side. If the followers of routine thinking in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry assume that they will succeed in getting international pressure exerted on us, so that we will accept their positions which are unacceptable to us, and that we will agree to them — they are wrong. Even if pressure were to be exerted on us, Mr. Speaker, it would be of no benefit to anyone, because we are used to pressure and the refusal to yield to it.

But I am convinced that no international pressure will be exerted on the State of Israel. It is inconceivable. The persons who praised our peace plan as fair, as constructive, as a breakthrough, are very serious persons. They know its full contents, except for certain amendments -which we have also transmitted to our friends the Americans - which do not alter the substance of the plan. This is the plan I made known to President Carter and President Sadat. And they cannot, by invitation of the conventional thinkers of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, change their minds within the space of a few weeks. We have today massive moral support throughout the U.S.: in the administration; in both Houses of Congress — and the House majority leader, Mr. Wright, told me that he praises and approves this peace plan; in American public opinion; and last, but not least, among the American Jewish community.

Therefore the conventional thinkers in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry are making a great mistake if they are under the illusion that if we do not accept their antiquated formulae, which are totally divorced from reality, then international pressure will be exerted on us. It will not. And we shall continue on our path, to bring peace to the people of Israel, to establish peace in the Middle East. For that is my aspiration — not from May and June 1977, but ever since November and December 1947, from the days in which — after a break in the relations of peace between the Palestinian Arabs and the Palestinian Jews — the first bullet, directed by an Arab hand into a Jewish heart, was fired, and from the days in which I appealed to the Palestinian Arabs from the underground, and called upon them: do not shed Jewish blood, let us build the country together, so that it may be a glorious land for the two peoples. But the bloodshed continued and there were five bloody wars — to which we want to put an end by establishing peace and signing peace treaties. This is our heart's desire. And I am certain, Mr. Speaker, that I can express the view of the entire house — with the exception, perhaps, of one faction — if I say: This is the heart's desire of the entire Jewish people — to bring peace to the land, having liberated the land.

Israel's self-rule plan.

Self-rule for Palestinian Arabs, Residents of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District, which will be instituted upon the Establishment of Peace:

1. The administration of the military government in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be abolished.

2. In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district administrative autonomy of the residents, by and for them, will be established.

3. The residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will elect an Administrative Council composed of 11 members. The Administrative Council will operate in accordance with the principles laid down in this paper.

4. Any resident 18 years old or over, without distinction of citizenship, including stateless residents, is entitled to vote in the elections to the Administrative Council.

5. Any resident whose name is included in the list of candidates for the Administrative Council and who, on the day the list is submitted, is 25 years old or over, is eligible to be elected to the council.

6. The Administrative Council will be elected by general, direct, personal, equal, and secret ballot.

7. The period of office of the Administrative Council will be four years from the day of its election.

8. The Administrative Council will sit in Bethlehem.

9. All the administrative affairs relating to the Arab residents of the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be under the direction and within the competence of the Administrative Council.

10. The Administrative Council will operate the following departments: education; religious affairs; finance; transportation; construction and housing; industry, commerce, and tourism; agriculture; health; labour and social welfare; rehabilitation of refugees; and the department for the administration of justice and the supervision of the local police forces. It will also promulgate regulations relating to the operation of these departments.

11. Security and public order in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities.

12. The Administrative Council will elect its own chairman.

13. The first session of the Administrative Council will be convened 30 days after the publication of the election results.

14. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, without distinction of citizenship, including stateless residents, will be granted free choice of either Israeli or Jordanian citizenship.

15. A resident of the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who requests Israeli citizenship will be granted such citizenship in accordance with the citizenship law of the state.

16. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who, in accordance with the right of free option, choose Israeli citizenship, will be entitled to vote for, and be elected to, the Knesset in accordance with the election law.

17. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who are citizens of Jordan or who, in accordance with the right of free option, become citizens of Jordan, will elect and be eligible for election to the Parliament of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in accordance with the election law of that country.

18. Questions arising from the vote to the Jordanian Parliament by residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be clarified in negotiations between Israel and Jordan.

19. A committee will be established of representatives of Israel, Jordan, and the Administrative Council to examine existing legislation in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza dis-

strict; and to determine which legislation will continue in force, which will be abolished, and what will be the competence of the Administrative Council to promulgate regulations. The rulings of the committee will be adopted by unanimous decision.

20. Residents of Israel will be entitled to acquire land and settle in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. Arabs, residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, who, in accordance with the free option granted them, become Israeli citizens, will be entitled to acquire land and settle in Israel.

21. A committee will be established of representatives of Israel, Jordan, and the Administrative Council to determine norms of immigration to the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. The committee will determine the norms whereby Arab refugees residing outside Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be permitted to immigrate to these areas in reasonable numbers. The rulings of the committee will be adopted by unanimous decision.

22. Residents of Israel and residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be assured freedom of movement and freedom of economic activity in Israel, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district.

23. The Administrative Council will appoint one of its members to represent the council before the government of Israel for deliberation on matters of common interest, and one of its members to represent the council before the government of Jordan for deliberation on matters of common interest.

24. Israel stands by its right and its claim of sovereignty to Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. In the knowledge that other claims exist, it proposes, for the sake of the agreement and the peace, that the question of sovereignty in these areas be left open.

25. With regard to the administration of the holy places of the three religions in Jerusalem, a special proposal will be drawn up and submitted that will include the guarantee of freedom of access to members of all faiths to the shrines holy to them.

26. These principles will be subject to review after a five-year period.

### **Points from reply by Prime Minister Menachem Begin to the Knesset debate of 28 December 1977.**

When Secretary of State Vance was in Israel I said to him, "What about a meeting with President Sadat?" and he said: "He would like to meet you too." When I visited Rumania in August, and had talks with Ceaucescu, I raised the possibility of a meeting with the Egyptian President, and he said that in the present stage he would prefer a meeting between representatives, but a personal meeting was also possible. When President Sadat went to Rumania,... President Ceaucescu recommended the meeting to him... we were not surprised, there was no shock.

Geula Cohen should ask herself: Perhaps she is wrong? Perhaps this is a good plan, not a bad one? Perhaps it is a Zionist plan and not a danger to the Zionist enterprise? Perhaps this is a plan for a powerful momentum of settlement, and not the stoppage of settlement?

For the first time there is an Israeli peace plan. The whole world is arguing about the Israeli plan, for and against... I am well aware of the power of the Soviet Union,... and yet I say: The support of the United States is more important than the opposition of the Soviet Union... we used to be isolated in America and Europe, and now we isolate someone else. This is a most important development...

And now I will tell you about two moments in the Ismailiya conference, in which I was prepared to say to the Egyptian President "*No, possimus*" and to tell my colleagues to be

ready to go back home... at a certain moment we were asked to accept a proposal that Israel undertakes to withdraw from Judea, Samaria, Sinai, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip in accordance with the preamble to Resolution 242 emphasizing "The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war." The debate was dramatic... I told President Sadat that we are in Sinai today in a perfectly legitimate way... 242 does not commit Israel to such a withdrawal, and therefore we shall not sign such a declaration... and we were ready to say: If so, we cannot continue. It was agreed that this paragraph should be eliminated from the joint statement, and we were able to carry on and prepare a joint statement.

A second moment was when we were called upon... to state that we agreed to establish a so-called Palestinian State in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. And again we said: On no account will we accept this. This would be a deadly danger to the State of Israel... It would also be a danger to Jordan — "And also a danger to you, Mr. President" — and a danger to the free world, because of the experience of airlifts to Angola and Mozambique and Ethiopia, for the flight-time from Odessa to Bethlehem is less than two hours.

And now I want to explain why we proposed a free choice of citizenship, including Israeli citizenship... again the answer is: Fairness... we never wanted to be like Rhodesia. And this is a way to show our fairness to all men of goodwill... here we propose total equality of rights — anti-racialism... — of course, if they chose such citizenship... we do not force our citizenship on anyone.

Someone tried to be clever and said: This is just a further interim settlement. There is no basis for this... in general, reconsideration is possible even before five years have passed. Everyone can make proposals, the Jordanian government can propose, the government of Israel can do it, the administrative council can do it: Let us consider, perhaps we can add something, or take away something. Actually, this framework of five years is quite incidental... but the agreement is something new — responsible administration of affairs by the residents in Judea and Samaria and Gaza through their elected representatives. This is the meaning of self-rule, and that is why the idea captured the imagination of people in the free world...

And now I shall discuss the concept of "territorial compromise," with which a part of this house has simply fallen in love: Since I fell in love with my wife, I have never seen such love... what is territorial compromise? One part to them and a part to me... it transpires that territorial compromise is the obstacle to peace. If we came to Sadat and told him you will have to sign, and inform the entire Arab world that you agree... to the Jordan rift being under Israeli sovereignty, he would say, on his part, "*Non possumus*." Thus our idea facilitates agreement and peace, leaving the question of sovereignty open... and so an agreement can be arrived at... the dogmatic, routine, fossilized talk of territorial compromise frustrates every prospect and possibility of conducting negotiations...

(Interjection: Will there be a plebiscite when the time comes to decide?) There is nothing in our laws about a plebiscite... if there is a majority for a plebiscite I shall of course accept the Knesset's legislation. I have heard that some people propose new elections: I am ready...

Mr. Speaker, the debate has ended. I ask for a vote, and I ask that each and every member of the Knesset, without distinction of faction, vote according to his conscience. There is no imposition, no coercion. I am confident of the result.

(The vote was 64 in favor, 8 against, 40 abstentions.)

**104. Points from a statement by Foreign Minister Dayan to the Knesset during the debate on the Israeli peace plan, 28 December 1977.**

*Mr. Dayan clarified various points in the peace plan and explained that the self-rule plan is designed to free Israel from the continued need to maintain military administration of the areas, while giving the inhabitants of these regions the right to self-rule, some thing they have never enjoyed. The arrangement would be for five years, to be re-examined at the end of that time. Mr. Dayan also said that the presence of the Israel Defence Forces will prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state. Excerpts:*

We have no doubt that President Sadat — and, in so far as we can judge, the Egyptian people support him — wants to continue with sincere negotiations for peace. I cannot say for certain that we will succeed in overcoming the differences of opinion, some of which are difficult and concerned with matters of principle.

Whatever the motives that have moved President Sadat to follow this path, under conditions which are very difficult for him... it is the peace plan that the government of Israel has proposed that enables President Sadat to catch his breath in these negotiations...

During the negotiations for the Geneva Conference, he realized that a considerable part of the Arab world, under the leadership of the Soviet Union — that this group, especially Syria, Iraq and the PLO, are feeding on the conflict and do not want to reach peace...

And now Egypt, at this stage of the Cairo conference, is alone... the question that faces us is this: In this situation... could we now demand of him permanent changes in the international border? Could his power of endurance enable him to bear that burden too?... The conclusion we reached was...that we must be content, as a substitute, with the demilitarization of Sinai — not in the full sense, but that in eastern Sinai there should be no significant Egyptian forces, and giving a special status to the border area between Israel and Egypt.

The basis of our proposal for Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district is a dual one: To free ourselves of the situation in which we are ruling over one million persons who do not want our rule and regard us a regime of a foreign occupier: To free ourselves — not them — from this situation, which we neither need nor want. The entire world regards us in this light, as an occupier imposing itself on one million persons who do not want this... at the same time to ensure Israel's security and our relation with our homeland, namely Judea and Samaria: Not to disavow it and not to sever ourselves from it...

This is not a provisional settlement, in the sense that this is not a settlement we are proposing for a five-year period.. What we are proposing is that within the framework of the peace treaty... we shall guarantee this administrative autonomy, and after five years the matter will be re-examined: But not that after five years the settlement will end. And after five years, when the re-examination takes place, no changes may be introduced... without our agreement.

We are proposing that we do not control the way of life of these Arabs, but that they will run their lives as they wish... but we are not proposing that they have absolute authority over the territory or over the Jews who will reside there...

As regards their relations with Jordan... I do not think anyone can propose more than we have. We have invited and continue to invite Jordan to take part in the negotiations... we are proposing two possibilities as regards two types of citizenship: Israeli and Jorda-



nian. We want to discuss with Jordanian representatives all the practical implications involved as regards citizenship and laws... there is a possibility that one day a part of this population will declare itself to be Palestinians, as an independent state — and that we do not want to allow to happen, and that is why we said: Only two alternatives: either Jordanian or Israeli...

(Interjection: How will you prevent a Palestinian State from arising?) (Interjection: By force of the army.) By force of the army: This is the first time I agree with you. Any agreement can be broken, and there is no court to look after our interests except ourselves. How will I prevent their refusal to sell land to Jews? How will I prevent the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Lebanon against our will? By force of the Israeli army: the I.D.F. ... is anyone so naive as to think that the State of Israel would exist if the I.D.F. did not ensure this? The I.D.F. guarantees it, and it will guarantee the agreements, if we arrive at them...

As regards the “Danger” of land purchases in Israel: As far as I know, ninety-two percent of Israeli land is publicly owned, by the Israel Lands Authority or the Jewish National Fund... no one obligates the Israel Lands Authority to sell land to anyone it does not want to. And as for the other eight percent, it is inhabited, thank God, by those who reside there...

The I.D.F. is the only army that will be stationed West of the Jordan, and it will be in any place where it sees fit to be for security reasons in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip: Not to tell the Arabs how to live, but to enable the Jews to live, not to intervene in the life of the Arabs, but to protect the lives of Jews. And we have established for ourselves the right to acquire land and settle on it, and that Jews will have the free right to move throughout Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip without a visa.

We do not want foreigners to protect us, but neither do we want to have to live as foreigners in our own homeland.

#### **105. Press conference with President Carter, 29 December 1977.**

*On the eve of his trip to Europe and the Middle East, President Carter said that while the Palestinian issue was the most difficult one to resolve, he felt Mr. Begin has made a long step in offering self-rule to the Palestinian Arabs. He expressed his fear of the establishment of a radical Arab state in the heart of the Middle East, and preferred to see a Palestinian entity or homeland linked to Jordan. While Mr. Begin expressed satisfaction with the Carter statements, President Sadat said he was disappointed. The Middle East excerpts from the Carter press conference follow:*

**Question.** I would like to ask you about the Middle East. President Sadat, I think everyone agrees, made a spectacular gesture that opened up a whole new era here. Do you feel that the Israelis have as yet made a comparable gesture? Have they been flexible in your view?

**The President.** Both President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin have been bold and courageous. We have been dealing with the Mideast question as a nation for decades, in a leadership role at least within the last two administrations. We see the complexity of the questions and the obstacles to progress. When I first became President, we spelled out the basic issues, withdrawal from occupied territories, secure borders, the establishment of real

peace, the recognition of Israel's right to be there and dealing with the Palestinian question.

We are now in a role of supporter. We encourage them to continue with their fruitful negotiations. We try to resolve difficulties to give advice and counsel when we are requested to do it. This is a better role for us. In the past, we have been in the unenviable position and sometimes unpleasant position, sometimes nonproductive position as mediator among parties who wouldn't even speak to each other.

So I think that the progress that has been made in the last month and a half has been remarkable and has been much greater than I had anticipated. And I know Sadat and Begin well and personally and favorably.

If any two leaders on earth have the strength and the determination and the courage to make progress toward peace in the most difficult region that I have ever known, it is Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat. There is no reason for us to be discouraged about it. We will help in every way we can to let their progress be fruitful. I think that President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin could have reached a fairly quick solution of just the Egyptian-Israeli problem in the Sinai region. But this is not what they want.

They both want to resolve the other questions — what is real peace? Will Israel be recognized as a permanent neighbor to the countries that surround them? Can the Palestinian question, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip be addressed successfully? Knowing how difficult these questions are, I have nothing but congratulations for them on what they have achieved so far.

**Question.** You are going to see King Hussein of Jordan. President Sadat said in an interview that was broadcast on public television last night that King Hussein had told him he was fully behind his efforts in public; until now, King Hussein's opinion has been relatively mysterious. Do you have any information that would make you agree with Mr. Sadat and are you going to discuss that with King Hussein and urge him to support the Sadat initiative when you see him?

**The President.** I don't intend to put any pressure on King Hussein. I couldn't if I wanted to, to immediately begin to negotiate with Israel and Egypt as a partner. If he wants to do it, we would certainly welcome that. What I will try to learn, however, is what role Jordan is willing to pay in the resolution of the Palestinian-West Bank problem, at what point he thinks it would be advisable for him to enter the negotiations personally as a government leader, and what we can do to get him to give his open support and encouragement to both Begin and Sadat as a struggle to resolve the differences between them.

I think King Hussein has, indeed in his private discussions with Secretary Vance and in his personal communications to me, shown a very positive attitude and in his travels around the Middle East to visit with other leaders, some who don't encourage the talks like President Assad, those who are very hopeful for progress, like those in Saudi Arabia, I think he has shown a constructive attitude already. But it helps me to understand on a current basis, the remaining problems and in what way they can be brought in to achieve a comprehensive peace.

I think they all trust our country, our motives are good. We have never misled them. We have been honest and as a person, as a country that carries messages from one to another, and I think that this puts us in a position to exert legitimate influence. But what we have always hoped for is direct negotiations or discussions, communications among the leaders involved with our offering good offices when we are requested to do it.

**Question.** Mr. President, the chief stumbling block right now does seem to be what we might call the right of return of the Palestinian to the West Bank and the Gaza. You have

in the past come out against an independent nation per se in the West Bank, but you have always talked about the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and you have been in favor of some kind of an entity, although people are still obscure about what that means, an entity perhaps linked to Jordan.

Would you, in light of the development, now clarify your views for us today, tell us if they have changed and if they have not, is it because the United States has decided to be neutral on this subject?

**The President.** Well, you have described my position very well. We do favor a homeland or an entity wherein the Palestinians can live in peace. I think Prime Minister Begin has taken a long step forward in offering to President Sadat and indirectly to the Palestinians, self-rule.

President Sadat so far is insisting that the so-called Palestinian entity be an independent nation. My own preference is that they not be an independent nation but be tied in some way with the surrounding countries, making a choice, for instance, between Israel and Jordan.

President Sadat has not yet agreed to that position of ours. Prime Minister Begin has offered that the citizens who live in the West Bank area or the Gaza Strip be given an option to be either Israeli citizens or Jordanian citizens, to actually run for the Knesset as candidates and to vote in the elections, both national Israeli and Jordan or local elections in the occupied territories once they are released.

But we don't have any real choice. I have expressed an opinion, but if Israel should negotiate with the surrounding countries a different solution, we would certainly support it.

But my own personal opinion is that permanent peace can best be maintained if there is not a fairly radical, new independent nation in the heart of the Middle Eastern area.

**Question.** In view of the deadlock now, however, have you tried to convince either side of your opinion? You have had conversations with both.

**The President.** I have expressed this opinion to President Assad, to King Hussein, to President Sadat, to Crown Prince Fahed, and also to Prime Minister Begin, and privately, and of course they have heard my statements publicly.

Our preference is not to have an independent nation there, but we are perfectly willing to accept any reasonable solution that the parties themselves might evolve.

**Question.** If I could just get back to the question I asked you, I take it that you would not pass judgment in public at least at this point on whether the Israelis had been flexible enough in the negotiations so far. Do you think that the position that they put forward — Mr. Begin said today that there would always be Israeli troops on the West Bank and that all who wanted peace will have to know that. Is that a realistic negotiating position?

**The President.** Yes. It certainly is a realistic negotiating position.

**Question.** Would Sadat ever accept that?

**The President.** I don't know. There is a great deal of flexibility there; the number of military outposts; the length of time when this interim solution might be in effect. I think Prime Minister Begin said it would be reassessed at the end of five years.

The degree of participation of the governments of Israel and Jordan in a possible administrative arrangement, all these questions could add a tone of progress or a possibility for resolution of what seems to be insurmountable obstacles.

So I think that Prime Minister Begin has already shown a great deal of flexibility. Obviously President Sadat and King Hussein and others would have to accept (or reject) whatever proposal is put forward.

But the length of time when the interim agreement would be in effect would be negotiable and the exact relationship between the new self-rule government as far as its autonomy is concerned, its dependence or subservience to the Jordanians or Israelis, all of these things are still to be negotiated. I think there is enough flexibility at this point.

**Question.** Could I just ask one follow-up on that? Has either Egypt or Israel, or both, asked the United States formally yet to provide guarantees for any agreement that is made?

**The President.** In my private conversations with some of them, they have expressed to me that if a guarantee arrangement between ourselves and Israel should be worked out, that it would be acceptable to the Arab leaders. But we have never discussed this between ourselves and Israel in any definitive form.

My preference would be that our involvement would be minimized after an agreement has been reached. But if it became a matter of having the negotiations break down completely, or having some limited role as mutually accepted among those parties involved, then we would consider that very, very favorably.

#### **106. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel television, 30 December 1977.**

*Mr. Dayan repeated his statement in the Knesset that a regional autonomy for the West Bank and the Gaza region was still possible even with the continued presence there of the Israeli army. The Foreign Minister also stated that Jordan has an important role to play in the Israeli plan, but that so far they have refused to accept the proposal. Mr. Dayan also said that unlike the Prime Minister, who was far more optimistic and expressed the hope that peace could be achieved in a matter of months, he was more sombre and felt that Israel was on the threshold of a long and painful journey towards peace. Text:*

**Q.** Perhaps we should begin with the declaration which caused a stir in the Knesset the day before yesterday, in which you said that we would, if necessary, prevent the adoption of Palestinian citizenship by residents of Judea and Samaria by employing the I.D.F. and you also said that 92 per cent of Israel's lands are state-owned and so Arabs from the areas would be virtually unable to buy land. Do you still hold to these statements?

**A.** First of all I still hold to what I said, and these were not statements from which I was quoting but rather which were made in answer to a question from Shoshana Arbeli in which she asked what we would do if, in violation of the agreement, the Arabs — those who will receive administrative autonomy — would want to establish a Palestinian State. I mentioned the entry of the I.D.F. in connection with the possibility that hundreds of thousands of refugees from Lebanon and other places would go there in violation of what was agreed in that paragraph of the agreement according to which immigration would be possible, and if in the course of the discussion of this agreed paragraph, we came to understand that there were other plans — Arab ones, of the P.L.O. — to transfer refugee camps here so that this could serve as a springboard to attack Israel. I said, that if they would want to create facts of this sort, to establish a Palestinian State in violation of the agreement — and I gave as an example that hundreds of thousands of refugees would come from Lebanon

and other countries and from the ranks of the P.L.O. — we would use the I.D.F. I realize that the repercussions from the idea of using the I.D.F. in this context were not good. This example came up in response to a question, and not in a general context.

As to the question of the lands, it was argued — and there was great anxiety among the participants of the debate — also by M.K. Allon, that our agreeing that Arabs — including those who would receive Israeli citizenship, but who had the vast Arab wealth behind them — would be entitled to buy lands in tiny Israel and west of the Green Line, would bring a disaster on us in this matter. I wanted to say that we have investigated this issue and the possible outcome. Our proposal is sincere, but 92 per cent of the country's lands are publicly owned, and if it does not wish to, it will not sell. I explained the facts, and I would not hide them even from the Arabs. Were we to have a discussion with those who are to get administrative independence, and were we to bring this paragraph of the agreement and they were to ask, what are our chances to buy the land of Israel, I would say to them that 92 per cent of these lands are state owned, this is not a secret.

We all should know the facts. There are hard facts or facts which open the door to many dangers. They should be known. But when only the clause which says that every Arab from Judea, Samaria and Gaza who will receive Israeli citizenship will be entitled to acquire lands in Israel is read, it is said, look, they're going to sell Israel. One must be aware of the facts.

**Q.** The plan for autonomy allows for evaluation and decision after five years. Then Israel, along with the other parties, has the right of veto.

**A.** The situation is this: The plan itself should be implemented in the framework of the establishment of peace, in other words, in the framework of a peace treaty. It is not a plan which is to be considered an interim settlement — at least not at this stage in which we are proposing it. Let us assume that we reach a peace settlement with Egypt, Jordan, and the Arabs from the areas, and that in the framework of this settlement the independent administration is also established. After five years, as the Prime Minister stated (and possibly even earlier), each of the sides can say, we would like to re-evaluate things. Changes in the agreement cannot be made except by common consent.

**Q.** Israel in fact maintains — and this has been stated explicitly — and will continue to maintain the I.D.F. in the field. The I.D.F. will not be withdrawn. In other words, this state of affairs could remain forever should Israel so desire. Does administrative autonomy seem possible to you with the I.D.F. actually in the areas for a very long period?

**A.** Absolutely, and I could see it only that way. In my opinion we must distinguish between two things when we speak of what can be done, of how to live together: Between self-rule for the Arabs in which they would live however they wished and we would not intervene in their lives, and the prohibition of Jews from the area, between our being forbidden to interfere in their affairs, and the desire to prohibit our entry. The I.D.F. must be there — and I said this in my remarks in the Knesset — not in order to interfere with the lives of the Arabs — we want to stop this, to abolish the military administration and not to interfere in their lives, they should conduct their lives however they choose — but in order to protect Israel's populace. And if no attempt is made to violate the entire agreement in a way that is seriously detrimental to us, Arabs could live in these areas without ever coming in contact with the I.D.F. during their entire lives. The I.D.F. would be there in order to be able to observe and prevent planes which might come from Iraq or Jordan or Syria from attacking Tel Aviv, and not in order to tell the inhabitants of Nablus how to live. Why couldn't this remain permanently?

**Q.** Of course the question is also how would the inhabitants of Nablus view this situation even if they did not actually see the soldiers.

**A.** They would like us to leave the area and they say so — that we should quit interfering in their lives, not only that the local police would be theirs but that we would not be in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip at all. This is completely contrary to two things from our point of view: To the insurance of our security and to the exercising of our right to be there: Just as an Arab is entitled to come from Jordan and settle near Tekoah, a Jew, if he acquires a piece of land there, they would like to have this prohibited. This is how they will see it, and the question is whether they are ready to live together with us on the assumption that we will not interfere in their lives, not force ourselves on them, tell them how to live or what to do. If they should want to adopt the connection between themselves and Jordan — let them. If they don't, and wish to be more autonomous and independent, let them be independent. We will not intervene.

**Q.** You mentioned the connection with Jordan in an individual context, to the effect that each person would choose his citizenship. But it was reported in the press that, at least during certain stages in the formulation of the plan, you supported a connection of any sort with Jordan, and that Mr. Begin opposed this position. Is there any truth to this?

**A.** There is no truth to there being disagreement, but there is truth to there being a question, and we agreed — my approach and I am certain also the Prime Minister's approach were completely coordinated — that Jordan is invited as a country to participate A) in the deliberations, and B) if it will be established according to our proposal, she will be very involved in the affairs of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

First of all, as to those who will be Jordanian citizens and will be elected to the Jordanian parliament, the question is what sort of validity the decisions of the Jordanian parliament will have for the lives of these Arabs. This is no simple matter. We said these things regarding the emigration of refugees and the various connections, but they were said in order to elaborate on the plan itself. Jordan is invited, as a party along with us — ourselves, and Jordan, and representatives of the Arabs in the areas, and a representative of Egypt — to sit down and together formulate a peace plan for this region. We are not trying to push Jordan out, but she does not wish to come.

**Q.** At this stage in which Jordan has not come, the negotiations on this as well will be held with Egypt. What if it should turn out, God forbid, that it was impossible to overcome the disagreement in the positions which have so far been presented, would Israel reconsider this plan?

**A.** I would prefer to characterize the situation a bit differently. The situation between us and Egypt is this, and she is at present, not only the principal initiator but, to my regret, also the only Arab state... we should be clear about this — Egypt has no basic arguments with us regarding the platform which we proposed as the basis of negotiations for a peace settlement between ourselves and Egypt. What we proposed to them is acceptable to them, in this part of the peace settlement between Israel and Egypt, as a basis for negotiations. If anyone thinks that we have difficulties or that Egypt has difficulties with us regarding peace negotiations — then they have no argument for a starting platform between ourselves and the Egyptians.

As to Jordan, they are referring to the Palestinian Arabs of the areas. There are two questions here: One is our proposal, which is not acceptable to Egypt, which does not grant self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, but this is related to the main question, which is the absence of a representative of either the Arabs

from the areas or from Jordan. In other words, let us assume that we were in the same situation in which we find ourselves with Egypt. We say, this is our plan, do you have any other proposal? Put in on the table. Because on the 15th of the month, when the discussion with Egypt will begin, they will bring alternative plans. They do not accept our plan as the sole basis for the negotiations.

**Q.** And does Israel also not consider this plan as the sole basis for the negotiations?

**A.** Israel is willing to consider proposals of theirs which we have not yet seen. We are saying, our plans have been proposed, certainly within these plans there are things which are for us more fundamental, and things which are more technical, but we are not saying that the other side cannot place its own plan on the conference table.

It has been said that our plan is not acceptable to them. Someone should present a different plan and that someone must be a party with whom a peace treaty can be signed: Either the Jordan government, or representatives of the Arabs in the areas — they haven't come.

**Q.** Let's go on to the subject of Sinai. Many arguments have been heard, mainly in the Knesset, since the publication of the plan, to the effect that Israel has conceded overly much already in its opening proposal. The question is, was it necessary to go so far, so quickly, and thereby to relinquish certain settlements to Egyptian sovereignty?

**A.** Israel has never extended her sovereignty over any area of Sinai. The situation is not one in which we are today agreeing to give an area which previous governments, or in which Israel decided at some point that the Rafah salient or Sharm El-Sheikh would become part of the State of Israel and over which it extended Israeli sovereignty. The question is whether now, in the present situation, in which Egypt is alone in its desire (and I believe it is sincere) to conduct negotiations for peace with us — whether we should say to them at the outset that we would like a peace treaty on the basis of transferring part of Sinai to Israeli sovereignty. And not only to say this, but to really mean it, to present this as a condition, as the basis of (a peace treaty).

Those who are critical of us, ask whether this was the proper step — here we are willing, Sadat comes to Jerusalem and the whole thing is wonderful, we want to make peace but Sharm El-Sheikh and a territorial strip up to the Mediterranean Sea, including the Rafah salient from here on in, will be part of the State of Israel within the framework of a peace treaty, and you must relinquish it from Egyptian sovereignty — which we have not denied, (since) we said that this was administered territory but we did not extend Israeli sovereignty to it.

At least I think — and there is no disagreement here between me and the Prime Minister — that this would have been a mistake of the highest order. There was no chance that Sadat would have accepted it, and secondly, it could not have been, given the present conditions of December '77, which is to say: This is our response to Sadat's initiative, when he is in a state of distress in the Arab world. What are the Israelis saying — transfer it to us. But I don't accept the other characterization according to which we are supposedly relinquishing the settlements, etc. In the detailed proposals, which do not involve the extension of Israeli sovereignty and the transfer of Egyptian territory to Israel, there are, in my opinion, appropriate means which will insure and provide not only for the maintaining of the settlements, but also for their security in Israeli hands.

**Q.** There has been much publicity regarding disagreement between yourself and Mr. Begin, and it has been comprehensive. I would like to ask you whether there is in fact a difference of opinion in political conceptions?

**A.** In regard to the plans, there is no disagreement. Perhaps in regard to certain evaluations, and at the moment I can't even really say on which topic we hold differing evaluations. I distinguish three things: our proposals — as to them there is no disagreement, evaluations of what Egypt, what Hussein is willing to accept, what the Arabs are ready to accept, at the present moment after Ismailiya. As far as I know, there are no disagreements between Mr. Begin and myself in evaluating what Egypt is willing to accept. We both think that Egypt's effort to continue to search for a way to peace with us is sincere — if they did not sincerely want to reach peace with us they would not have established the committees, the political and the military, and at such a high level. In other words, in regard to the evaluations of what Egypt or even of what the U.S. would accept in this context, there are no disagreements.

**Q.** Immediately after the talks, at least in the interviews, Mr. Begin sounded more optimistic.

**A.** That's why I said that there were three parts. The first is our plan. Secondly, evaluations of what the other side would be ready to accept. Thirdly, the personal reaction, the emotional, of what makes Mr. Begin happy with Ismailiya and me much less happy. So, it is not that there are differences of opinion as to the evaluations, but there is a difference in the internal approach as to whether this is (a time) for great celebration or whether we are going on a painful journey, and so forth. Mr. Begin's comments reflected his feeling, and I was told that I wore a more sombre expression, I admit.

**Q.** It's just a matter of temperament, or more than that?

**A.** It depends how you look at it. I'll tell you about (the issue of) settlements. For me the issue of settlement — and this is not to say that from Mr. Begin's point of view it is different, I don't know if it's different — for me settling the land is one of the main things. When there is talk of folding up a settlement, for me it's like sticking in a knife. It's not the individual settler whom I think is a wonderful person, but the act of settling, also from the standpoint of the land, such as when people go to places like the Rafah salient and establish settlements there. And especially from the Jewish standpoint, young Israeli men and women becoming farmers — in that I see the essence of our Zionism. Even if we both agree that on this point we should compromise or pass, or that these settlements will encounter difficulties, then the level of my excitement about this settlement is at its highest.

**Q.** Is folding up settlements being considered?

**A.** No, absolutely not. But they have reason to worry when it is said that the same Israeli sovereignty which existed here until now will no longer apply. The I.D.F. will not be sitting up in front of us. But if you, the Israel government sincerely tell the President of Egypt that you do not contest the Egyptian sovereignty on the international boundary, then the sovereign status of those settlements which are West of the international boundary will be likely to change in one way or another, rather than having the I.D.F. emplaced up to Bir Gafgafa and to the Suez canal protecting these settlements from every side.

I believe that in our proposal we included all of the necessary arrangements to guarantee their security and connection to Israel — and their security would be in Israeli hands — but to say that there would be no change in their security in that situation as opposed to the situation which existed until now, this I could not say.

**Q.** Before the interview we mentioned the denial of the report about the Prime Minister's possible trip, which brings me to the many reports of your own trips recently. I wanted to clarify one thing: The Prime Minister stated in general terms that our contacts with Egypt were open and above board, and that in fact there was no need for secret steps. Why are the secret trips causing such a storm?



A. I can confirm that as far as Egypt is concerned — between exactly a week ago and today there was no need for secret contacts. I would not commit myself on this in regard to the future, and certainly not in regard to the past.

#### **107. Statements by Presidents Sadat and Carter, Aswan, 4 January 1978.**

*President Carter made an unscheduled stop in Aswan to confer with President Sadat, ten days before the beginning of the talks of the Israel-Egypt Political Committee. At the end of their talks, they made statements to the press, extracts of which follow, in which they reiterated their positions. Mr. Carter said that the U.S. supports true peace based on normal relations, withdrawal of Israel to secure and recognized borders and a resolution of the Palestinian problem. The problem must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable them to participate in the determination of their own future. This became known as the Aswan formula. Israeli leaders felt that they could “live with” this formula.*

#### **Carter:**

“President Sadat, People of Egypt, it is an honour and a pleasure for us to be in this great country led by such a strong and courageous man. Mr. President, your bold initiative in seeking peace has aroused the admiration of the entire world. One of my most valued possessions is the warm and personal relationship that binds me and President Sadat together and which exemplifies the friendship and the common purpose of the People of Egypt and the People of the United States of America.

“The Egyptian-Israeli peace initiative must succeed. While still guarding the sacred and historic principles held by the nations that have suffered so much in this region, there’s no good reason why accommodation cannot be reached. In my own private discussions with both Arab and Israeli leaders I have been deeply impressed by the unanimous desire for peace. My presence here today is a direct result of the courageous initiative which President Sadat undertook in his recent trip to Jerusalem. The negotiating process will continue in the near future.

“We fully support this effort and we intend to play an active role in the work of the political committee of Cairo which will soon reconvene in Jerusalem. We believe that there are certain principles, fundamentally, which must be observed before a just and a comprehensive peace can be achieved.

“First, true peace must be based on normal relations among the parties to the peace. Peace means more than just an end to belligerency.

“Second, there must be withdrawal by Israel from territories occupied in 1967 and agreement on secure and recognized borders for all parties in the context of normal and peaceful relations in accordance with United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338.

“And third, there must be a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. The problem must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future.

“Some flexibility is always needed to ensure successful negotiations and the resolution of conflicting views. We know that the mark of greatness among leaders is to consider

carefully the views of others and the greater benefit that can result among the people of all nations which can count on a successful search for peace.

**Sadat:**

"We had very intensive and fruitful talks upon the whole arena, in particular the conflict here in the Middle East and the whole international position and our bilateral relations. I'm very happy to say that our views were identical and we have agreed upon certain steps to keep the momentum of the peace process. All I ask is let us have in a very short time the opportunity to welcome President Carter and to show him the gratitude of my people and myself. In the same time may I say that in the peace process we welcome all the parties concerned... They are welcome whenever they find it convenient to them because this time as I have already repeated before, we are heading toward peace and real peace in the area... permanent peace... thank you."

**108. Statement by Prime Minister Begin to the Herut central committee, 8 January 1978.**

*Between Ismailiya and the beginning of the talks of the Political Committee, President Sadat and the Egyptian press began to issue demands upon Israel. One of them called Israel to liquidate its settlements in Sinai and the West Bank. Doubts were expressed in the Egyptian press over the readiness of Israel to move forward towards peace. The Egyptian demands prior to the negotiations aroused anger in Israel and this compelled the Prime Minister to again explain the position of his government on the peace issues. He said also that if the Israeli plan is not acceptable, there is always the possibility of withdrawing it. Excerpts:*

I feel bound to open my address by responding to two pronouncements that were heard in recent days from across the border.

President Sadat announced that he will not tolerate the presence of Israeli civilian settlements following the signing of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

From this rostrum, let me say with all due respect and friendship to President Sadat, that such inflexibility and intransigence as expressed in the words "will not tolerate" cannot serve the peace-making process. We do not employ expressions of this kind since we want an agreement and the signing of a peace treaty.

I informed Sadat in Ismailiya that our army is in Sinai legitimately because the Six-Day War was, in the highest sense of the term, a war of legitimate defence. I had only just begun to cite the words "throw them into" when President Sadat, in Ismailiya, completed the phrase and said, "the sea." We both agreed that, in the summer of 1967, between 15 May and 5 June of that year, our people faced not only the danger of aggression, not only a threat to our independence, but also the danger of annihilation. On every side the call was: "Kill them, destroy them, throw them into the sea." There is, therefore, no vestige of doubt that the Six-Day War was a war of national self-defence.

In the wake of such a war, the armed forces remain in the place they stood on the day of the cease fire, or as fixed by any bi-lateral agreement, and it is only in a peace treaty that their final deployment is determined.

I went on and said to President Sadat in Ismailiya that according to international law, when a war of defence takes place, there exists the right of agreed territorial changes in a peace treaty. We proposed a compromise arrangement, that the Israeli settlements located in the Sinai borderlands or in the Rafiah approaches and along the Gulf of Eilat, will remain in place and will be defended by an Israeli defence force.

I said to President Sadat: We respect your principles and we trust that you will respect ours. And our principle is, in the light of our generation's experience, not to leave any Jewish settlement without an Israeli defence force. And they will be linked to the State of Israel's courts and administration. This is a compromise proposal that is fair and is supported by the United States and Great Britain. It is clear that this is our proposal.

If the Egyptian delegation rejects it, it is feasible that the Government of Israel will then decide to instruct [its delegation] in accordance with the great principle of international law which says if one party presents a proposal preliminary to discussions on a peace treaty and the other party does not accept it, then the first party has the right to declare that its proposal is no longer valid, a priori. In which case, the Israeli delegation would have the right, if the Government so decides, to insist upon the demand for territorial changes in the international boundaries in keeping with international law.

President Sadat said that Israel could dismantle or burn its settlements. I would suggest to him, again with respect, that Israel and Egypt agree to leave the monopoly for the burning of cities to the Roman Caesar Nero. Israelis do not burn settlements. They build and maintain them.

We therefore put forward our fair proposal. And we shall insist upon it when the detailed negotiations begin in the joint political committee and also, if the problem arises, in the joint military committee. It will begin its deliberations on Wednesday, in Cairo, in the framework of the military committee headed by the Minister of Defence and, in Jerusalem on the following Monday, in the political committee which, on our side, will be headed by the Foreign Minister.

One further summary remark: In the Knesset, in the presence of President Sadat, I declared: In the forthcoming negotiations between the two countries there must not be vanquished and victors; we shall speak to each other as equals.

I reiterate this call and, clearly, the attitude of no vanquished and no victors cannot but be reciprocal.

#### **109. Press conference with Foreign Minister Dayan, 17 January 1978.**

*The Foreign Minister of Egypt arrived in Israel on 15 January for the meeting of the Political Committee. Upon his arrival he stated that there could be no peace as long as Israel occupies Arab territories and denies the rights of the Palestinians. Secretary of State Vance arrived on the 16th and the talks opened in Jerusalem on 17 January. Before the formal opening, Foreign Minister Dayan gave a press conference in which he explained the agenda and the procedure to be followed. He also answered questions about Israel's position. Excerpts:*

**Mr. Dayan:** I just wanted to inform you in brief about the way that we want to go on with the meetings of the political committee. We have agreed as you know about the agenda, which you all know of it. Another question is how to deal and how to negotiate over the different subjects. The last subject. The "C". The elements for Peace Treaties is more of a technical nature rather than a political one, while the first two — the first one dealing with the declaration of the Principles for Peace Treaties and the principal problem of the Palestinian Arabs are more of a political nature. So we want to start with the first one and this morning those parties put on the table their proposals for the declaration of the Principles for Peace Treaties. I don't know whether you got them from the Egyptian delegation and from ours. If you haven't I am very happy so it means that the committee at least has something which they do not share with the press yet: but it would be of no surprise to you, that of course, the papers are not identical. And you can guess that a main point on which we do not agree has got to do with the withdrawal from all the territories, and everything to do with that as a matter of principle. And when it comes to the Palestinian problem, with the rights for self-determination, independent state and anything connected with it, now, I'm sure there is nothing new about it, but a real problem is how to deal with it. What we are doing is that we decided to have the next meeting tomorrow afternoon at 3.00 in order to give the parties an opportunity, each one of them, to study the other party's paper and to see what are probably identical in both of them, what are not too far so that we may reach an agreement relatively easily through the negotiation, with some change of some word and so on, and what are really representing the main gaps over which we have to negotiate, and probably, to look for new formulas — something like that.

When I say "We" I mean in this concern also the representatives of the United States of America. They wanted too to have time at their disposal to study the papers and to see what they can do about it. So the time is not really wasted though there are no meetings. There'll probably be informal talks and as a matter of fact, today in the late afternoon, some of our people would be meeting with some of the Egyptian delegation in order to start working by comparing the two papers concerning the declaration of principles for Peace Treaties. Of course, if any delegates or parties want to meet informally with the other during the time between today's and tomorrow's session, then we are all available for that. That's what I really wanted to say as an opening, and to stress once again, the thing that we said before and the thing that I have to repeat again. Though we have presented our proposals, we have been saying right from the beginning that everything is negotiable and it's absolutely the right of every party, each party to put their own proposals and we will be discussing the other party's proposal even if we do not agree with it and will try not only to listen to it, but to see whether we can compromise, come close whatever should be done to reach an agreement.

The only thing that we do not really accept is a kind of an ultimatum of take it or leave it. Must do that — but what we do accept willingly is that each party, and in this respect the Egyptian delegates, should have absolutely a free hand in submitting their proposal about everything, about the settlements, about withdrawal, about any part and any subject. And we would negotiate over their proposals just as we would expect them to negotiate over ours, and we would try to see whether we can reach an agreement, some kind of a compromise over the different proposals. Thank you very much.

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister, I wonder if you could tell us if the question of Israeli settlements within the Sinai is dealt with in either the Egyptian or the Israeli text or draft of the agreement on principles that was offered this morning. And if it is not, I wonder if you can

tell us where it will be dealt with in this current stage of negotiations and how important or what role you think it will play here in Jerusalem.

**Dayan.** It is not mentioned in either of the papers. If I may disclose something of the recent history of the proposals for the agenda, at a certain point we did propose that the subject of the Israeli civilians — and by that we meant also the Israeli settlements in Sinai — would be dealt with on the agenda of the political committee. But that was not accepted by the Egyptian delegation so we dropped it and it is not there. It may be, that indirectly, it will be referred to within the principles of withdrawal from territories. I suppose so — but not specifically. It is not mentioned, though we're ready to discuss it specifically on the agenda. But once the Egyptians did not accept it, so it is not on the agenda here. Now whether that would be discussed or not in Cairo with the military committee I don't know, and I personally have no objection that it would be discussed further, if the Egyptian and Israeli delegation there find it appropriate. But here it is not on the agenda and directly I don't think it will be discussed here.

**Q.** May I follow that question? I'd like to ask what you can tell us about why the Egyptians did not want to discuss it here.

**Dayan.** Well, I asked my colleague the Egyptian Foreign Minister to participate with me in this press conference and he preferred to do it in a few days' time and I think it would be appropriate for you to ask him about it. I really don't think that it would be fair for me to try to explain the Egyptian position.

**Q.** This morning the Egyptian Foreign Minister said there will be no real peace in Palestine for the House of Israel unless there will be an equal house there for the Palestinian People. Would you care, Mr. Dayan, to tell us if you agree or disagree with this statement and why?

**Dayan.** I think that we should go into this question and not just within the frame of the wording, nice as it is, but to go into the substance. Now we have presented our proposal about a self-rule or self-administration and we don't think that a small group, a fraction of a nation should have an independent state, this is our attitude, but if the Egyptian delegation or eventually if the Jordanian, or the representative of the Palestinian Arabs, would be participating in this meeting and they would have different views about it, and they want to bring it, like the Egyptians now, to the table, and to argue over it, and to propose a different proposal, we shall discuss it of course, and we shall negotiate over it, we shall examine it and see what exactly is meant by that.

Let me just say that within the Arab world that there are also some different views about it, whether the Palestinian Arabs here should be linked with Jordan or whether they should have an independent state and there are other proposals too. So just the phrase that there will be no peace in the Middle East unless the Palestinian Arabs will have a House like Israel is a nice phrase. But if the Egyptians have this attitude and this concept, let's sit down and discuss it, what exactly should take place in the Gaza Strip, in Judea and Samaria and whether they should be states, independent of what the role and rights of the Israelis should be in these phases, whether the Israeli forces can stay or should be withdrawn from this area, whether the Israelis or the Jews should have the rights to have Israeli settlements there or not, not just a general phrase.

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister, there are reports that the Americans will be proposing that your concept of self-rule on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip be viewed as an interim arrangement leading ultimately to greater self-determination for the Palestinian Arabs. Do

you see this American formula as a possible way out of the impasse which has developed over the future of the West Bank and the Palestinian question?

**Dayan.** I just read about it in the press but I haven't heard anything about it yet from the American representative. I have been with Secretary Vance last night and this morning and I haven't heard anything about it from him. Of course, whenever the Americans submit their proposal we shall study it carefully and discuss it with them and the other parties. But as for the moment, nothing like this proposal has been presented to us.

**Q.** If that were to be proposed, Mr. Dayan, would you view it favorably?

**Dayan.** Do you really think that I should discuss it with you before the United States of America with their representative submit it to us, that I should take it from you that they are going to do it. They speak good English and they haven't presented anything yet.

**Q.** Mr. Dayan, would you like your Prime Minister Mr. Begin rather resign than agree to give up the Israeli settlements in Sinai?

**Dayan.** I wouldn't like him to resign. I would like to keep my position and I think that we are in our position and the Prime Minister is in his position to fight for our position and not for resigning it. As long as you have a majority and the support of the House and the Cabinet I think that he should fight — I mean in a political way — for the objective that he is standing for.

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister, this morning you stated that peace can be achieved through concessions and compromise and just now you said that you do not agree to withdrawal whether full or partial and you don't agree to the rights of the Palestinians for self-determination. Can you tell us what kind of compromise you are ready to offer for the sake of peace?

**Dayan.** This is not exactly an exact quotation of what I have just said. I said that we have our proposals which we have presented in writing to the other party that we are ready and I repeat that we are ready, to negotiate, to discuss, to study and to see whether we can reach an agreement along the other party's proposals too. So we do not say that just because we have presented certain proposals, because of that we do not want to enter into negotiations over the other party's proposals. On the contrary, we do want, and that is really the whole object of negotiation, to sit down with other parties to study their proposals and to see whether we can come to an agreement. What I said this morning is that I believe the object of negotiation is to sit down with other parties to study their proposals and to see whether we can come to an agreement. What I said this morning is that I believe that this is not a substitute for war. But peace is an alternative for war and basically speaking is based on a compromise and concession and this is our position as far as we are concerned. We are ready for compromises and for concessions and to meet the other party's proposal, we want to sit down with them.

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister, can you give an appraisal of the Egyptian Foreign Minister's opening statement this morning in the light of your own declaration that a peace settlement is an alternative and not a substitute for war, and in the negotiations behind closed doors are there any signs of Egyptian readiness to reach peace by concession, compromise and mutual agreement, to quote your own words.

**Dayan.** I really honestly think that it is too early to come to a conclusion about that. Now, the situation just now is that those parties have presented their proposals. Of course what we have now on the table are two different proposals, and the question whether the parties, the Israelis and the Egyptian one, are ready to modify their proposal, or their posi-

tion would be found only after we can eliminate the differences and start negotiating over the differences.

Now only 2 hours ago we got their paper and they got ours and we decided that tomorrow at 3:00 we shall meet again in order to see whether we can reach or at least make some progress towards reaching an agreement over the differences. But just now what we know is that the two papers of course are not identical and they can't be identical. There are two different proposals there.

**Q.** Mr. Minister, in recent times it seems that Egypt would agree on the fact of delivering up to Arab countries a sort of supervision for the so-called Holy Places for the Moslem People. In the frame of your recent visit to His Holiness Pope Paul VI, would you please kindly tell us what do they mean when they say including Jerusalem and what would be the destiny of the Holy Places according to the Egyptian papers, because you are the only person who's gone through it. Thank you.

**Dayan.** It's a good question — I don't mean your question is a good question. I think that the question about Jerusalem is a so-called good question and I have been asking it too. Not the first man, but some of our colleagues, because the way that we heard it, more from King Hussein rather than from the Egyptian delegation. And actually the Egyptian delegation speaks here for the Palestinian Arabs and for the Jordanians. So the position of King Hussein is that what he says is that the old line and the sovereignty of Jerusalem, East Jerusalem should go back to Jordan.

Now that physically means that Mt. Scopus, the Hebrew University, the Hadassah Hospital, that the Jewish Quarter in the Old City, the Wailing Wall, the Mt. of Olives. all this should go to the Jordanian sovereignty because we lost it in the war of '48, while we managed to take it back in the war of '67. Now, whether they really mean it — that's what they say and I believe they mean it. They know the peace — they are not foreigners there, and they can go around but if they really do mean it that's because they managed by force to take the Jewish Quarter and Old Jerusalem and Mt. Scopus with the Hebrew University and with Hadassah Hospital and it turned to be under their control for 10 years between '48 and '67 — or 20 years, between '48 and '67. Therefore it is on Arab soil and now the Hebrew University and Hadassah and the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem should go to Jordan — even just the names of the places, like the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem, the Wailing Wall — speak for themselves.

Whether this is really meant by 'just solution' and this would be the only solution that would provide peace in the Middle East is a great question. That's what I meant by saying it is a good question. What really do they mean by that.

**Q.** Can you tell us please if the Egyptian working paper is more strongly worded than the Egyptian Foreign Minister's statement?

**Dayan.** The Egyptian Foreign Minister's? Stronger, let me say something about it. I cannot quote the Egyptian paper presented to us this morning, but it's not by far different from their position that was explained to us in Ismailiya and I can refer to what took place in Ismailiya. Of course this was not that confidential, so for instance the philosophy, the concept, is that Israel should go back from all the territories, including the Golan Heights, and that there should be the rights for the Palestinians not only to have self-determination but if they so decide to have a Palestinian State. Now, I really am asking, questioning, whether really when President Sadat says that we should rely with our security upon him, upon President Sadat, and I'm sure that he says it honestly and he believes so — can he assume responsibility for the Golan Heights and for the attitude of the Syrians under the

present circumstances. And to tell us especially in a very very strong wording that we have to get off the Golan Heights without worrying about our security and the future and that he, President Sadat, for whatever President Assad thinks of him and speaks of him that he can assume responsibility in Cairo for Israel, for our settlements in the northern part of Israel, if we get off the Golan Heights. And just talking about a Palestinian State. I am not questioning the right of people to take part and to decide over their future, but this is not the only question.

**Question:** Now if there is an independent state here in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and that would be run by the PLO with their concept about Israel, that they haven't changed their covenant, and with the resolution of the last Tripoli conference, can President Sadat, who asked very firmly and in very strong wording for the rights of the Palestinian Arabs for self-determination which might be a Palestinian State. Can he or anyone assure us what attitude the future Palestinian State run by the PLO would take against Israel? So what I can say is only about the Ismailiya talks and about the paper here that it is not by far different from the Ismailiya position presented to us by the Egyptians and some of the questions that we want to discuss with our Egyptian colleagues. But we do accept their papers as representing their position that should be discussed and dealt with just like our paper on equal footing during the meeting, and that is what a political committee is for, to discuss all the proposals, theirs and ours, whatever we think about our question.

**Q.** Mr. Dayan, how can you explain the apparent contradiction between first offering to return all of Sinai to Egyptian sovereignty, withdrawing the Israeli troops and then wanting to keep Israeli settlements in Sinai as well as access to Israeli air fields there?

**Dayan.** When we presented our plan, our concept about the role of Sinai within a Peace Treaty, it was not divided into parts. It was a comprehensive plan in its entirety and there it was compared with a buffer zone, with a demilitarized zone, with Israeli settlements staying where they are with the U.N. forces, the U.N. flag and control over a certain area, with what should take place in Sharm El-Sheikh and so on. And the way that we took it and still take it is that this plan we thought should be acceptable by the Egyptians that included the sovereignty of the Egyptians but not with excluding and removing the Israeli settlements or not allowing Israeli civilians to stay in Sharm El-Sheikh and with some arrangements about the military air fields and so on. This is a concept that you can take it or you can try something else that was really advocated and recommended by the Israeli Government all through the years was that we should not go back to the old lines, and that that area which includes now the Israeli settlements and Sharm El-Sheikh all along the international boundary from Sharm El-Sheikh up to the Mediterranean should change hands and become part of the Israeli sovereignty. So that was the old concept and what we tried after the bold move of Sadat and his special position now, to say maybe we would agree and that might satisfy our security needs to do with even less than what we wanted in the past. Security Council Resolution 242 does not call upon us to go all the way back from the territories. This interpretation is accepted by the United States of America too, that 242 does not mean that Israel has to go from these territories and that we have to provide Israel with secure boundaries and that change in the international permanent borders can take place.

Either we insist on our interpretation of 242 and ask for changes in the international boundaries about the sovereignty or, if we try to do something like that, less than that. Then this is based on the agreement of the other party, of the Egyptians that they would agree to special arrangements and agreement if they are sovereign over the Sinai then by being the sovereign they have to agree to make an agreement about what will take place



there. That they would agree that in certain spots there should be special arrangements by their agreement without changing it in the international boundaries. So I am not saying here that they have to make a choice either one or number two that's all. They can propose other arrangements or other solutions whatever they propose. Even their present proposal that there would be a full complete withdrawal of the Israeli civilians and military, it's their right, and we shall negotiate over it. But answering your question, how can we propose it. What I am saying is we could have proposed what Mrs. Meir and Mr. Rabin and Eshkol's Governments — and in some of them I served — and that was the traditional Israeli concept that we should not go back to the old lines and that was specifically said about the Sinai boundary that the area including Sharm El-Sheikh up to the Mediterranean will change hands and become part of Israel. Does anyone think that President Sadat would have preferred that to what we have just suggested now? Would that be easier for him to accept or more acceptable to him? I doubt it.

**Q.** Mr. Vance said this morning that the solution of the Palestine problem required Palestinians to participate in determining their own future. In specific terms what do you see by participation in determining their future and therefore their sovereignty.

**Dayan.** We have agreed and even initiated — and I would like everybody to remember it. There are a lot of things about me that I do not insist should be remembered and they are remembered. But, when we negotiated with the representative of the United States of America in New York, the so-called working paper, it was Geneva Peace Conference. It was our suggestion that, negotiating over the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This negotiation, the working group for that should include the representatives of the Palestinian Arabs, even though they are not mentioned in Resolution 242. Nothing is said in 242 about the Palestinian Arabs. They are not a party there. But we said that although all the parties accepted that the basis of the negotiations for the Geneva Peace Conference should be Resolution 242 and 338, and in spite of the fact that the Palestinian Arabs are not mentioned there. We suggest, we Israelis suggest that the working group discussing the issues of the West Bank and Gaza should include the parties which are Egypt, Jordan, Israel and representatives of the Palestinian Arabs. This formula was endorsed in Ismailiya too. That is to say that if Jordan and the representatives of the Arabs residing in this area, would participate here or in the Cairo Conference that they should be included in the party negotiating about the issues. If you want to call it the future...the solving...the solution, of the Palestinian Arabs and they should be in that working group it should not be done without them. If they care to come and sit down there, we can't force them. If they don't want to come, if they want to stay out then we have to submit our own proposal, but that is what is meant by that.

**Q.** Would Israel be willing to consider adjustments of its Southern borders in exchange for adjustments of the Northern Sinai?

**Dayan.** We haven't proposed anything like that and we would consider any proposal including such a one. If this would be proposed by the Egyptians, we would consider all proposals submitted by the Egyptians. We have not submitted such a proposal and I don't think that we shall. But if Pres. Sadat or the Egyptian delegation would come out with such a proposal we shall discuss it like we would discuss any other proposal suggested by them.

**110. Speeches at Gala Dinner in the Knesset on the occasion of the opening of talks of the Political Committee, 17 January 1978.**

*Prime Minister Begin used the opportunity to explain in detail the position of Israel on the various items that separate it from the Egyptian position, chief among them Jerusalem, the Palestinian issue and the subject of self-determination. In his reply, Foreign Minister Kamel of Egypt refused to be drawn into a discussion and pointed to his opening remarks at the talks. Secretary Vance noted with satisfaction the opening of the talks as a major step forward. Text:*

**Mr. Begin:** I have decided tonight in the presence of three Foreign Ministers to disclose a State Secret concerning the relations between Egypt and Israel. Before I do so I appeal to the press crew which is quite well represented tonight to report my statement as accurately as they can. Every word counts. Responsibility is great, let us share it. Now I am going to divulge the secret.

Ladies and Gentlemen. Egypt and Israel have differences of opinion, and with the knowledge of the existence of the differences we work hard to overcome the difficulties, reach an agreement and in God's good time sign peace treaties. Our dear and honoured guest, the Foreign Minister of Egypt, told us upon arrival on which circumstances peace cannot be established. I will not repeat his speech. I will only say that if I followed suit and used the negative term, then I would say on behalf of Israel that peace cannot be established should Israel restore or agree to restore the fragile breakable aggression-provoking and bloodshed-causing lines preceding the 5th of June 1967. And to this there is almost an absolute national consensus in this country. For peace cannot be established with the redivision of Jerusalem, the Capital City not only of the State of Israel but traditionally and culturally of the Jewish People since the days of King David. And why should it be redivided? London and Paris are one city, Moscow and Washington are one city, Cairo and Damascus are one city, can anybody envisage barbed wire dividing this city? Just impossible. Inconceivable. However, I prefer the positive relations to the negative and therefore I will say under what circumstances peace is reachable and will be established. Peace will be reached, established when we respect mutually our principles, and although we have the feeling of urgency, we also have patience. There will be peace.

Ladies and Gentlemen. Permit me to dwell on the one thesis and to sing the praise of a great concept given to us by one of the greatest minds ever born in humanity that was the concept is of self-determination. Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the right of self-determination to the world. Near the end of the First World War and on the basis of that right a committee dealing with this issue concerning the Middle East reported to the effect. I quote: It is just that Palestine should become a Jewish State, all nations subjugated, enslaved, oppressed, base their struggle for liberation on that concept of Woodrow Wilson. We too, because in those days every intelligent woman and man understood that the right of self-determination of the Jewish dispersed, persecuted, humiliated, ultimately physically destroyed Jewish People is returning to the Land of their forefathers and re-establishing or

Now may I say, Ladies and Gentlemen, that I sing the praise of self-determination in relation to the great Arab people.

I learnt from my master and teacher Ze'ev Jabotinsky to have deep respect for the great Arab people and to pay tribute to their invaluable contribution to human civilization,

especially during the time when our own eagle, the Rambam, wrote his most important books in Arabic, out of respect for the great Arab people we not only recognize, we rejoice in the expression of their right for self-determination. They have self-determination expressed in the existence of 21 sovereign Arab states, whereas they lived in the '20s — certainly earlier — in subjugation to foreign rules since the time of the Turkish rule and later under the British, under the French, under the Italians. We do not begrudge them that wonderful, perhaps unprecedented, use of the right to self-determination, in an area stretching from the Persian Gulf up to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, 12 million square kilometres, 21 sovereign Arab states.

The Egyptian Foreign Minister is a young man, but the Foreign Secretary and I belong to the same generation — excuse me — and our generation, Mr. Secretary, remembers that wonderful concept of self-determination was misused in the '30s. In the late '30s as the result of the misuse of that concept disaster was brought on Europe, upon the world, which extricated itself from their disaster almost miraculously. And therefore out of deep respect for the great Arab people and rejoicing and not begrudging their right of self-determination, may I state that never again (will) that concept be misused because we'll remember the '30s, the late '30s and the result of that misuse.

Mr. Foreign Minister. When you go back home soon — and then come back soon, we would like your presence in Jerusalem (Ezer likes his presence in Cairo from time to time) — convey to the President our respect and our friendship. You should know that the people of Israel, our democratic Parliament which you saw today, in action, and the Government, have deep respect and friendship for your President, and appreciate his decision, his historic decision to come to Jerusalem. We of course received him as I promised in my letter to him with respect and cordiality and he felt it. Those members of the Egyptian delegation who followed and accompanied President Sadat will bear me out that the reception was respectful and cordial as befits that hospitality which our peoples inherited from our common Father, Old Abraham. So convey this message of respect, friendship and good will.

Mr. Secretary. We meet quite often, either in Jerusalem or in Washington. May I express our gratitude to you and to Ambassador Lewis for your contribution to have an agreed-upon agenda for the two Foreign Ministers of Egypt and Israel. The French call an agenda "*Ordre du Jour*," which in English translation means the order of the day, but in order to have an agreed order of the day, we lost a night. We spoke on the phone with Sam since 2:30 in the morning and little sleep we had that night but it was worthwhile. We thank you for the American contribution to that initial agreement which is very important, and please Mr. Secretary convey to the great friend of Egypt and of Israel our thanks.

Now Ladies and Gentlemen, this is an evening of friendship, of understanding, of goodwill, may I say it is no secret that we have differences of opinion. We have, as anyone of you who studies history we do not know that all negotiations to establish peace and to sign Peace Treaties after war started from differences of opinion. Ultimately an agreement was reached and peace was established, so I do believe this is going to be the case with the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I raise my glass to peace between the great Arab people and the State of Israel, to cooperation between the great Egyptian people and the people of Israel, to the traditional lasting, ever-lasting friendship between the United States and the State of Israel — and with God's help we will leave the blessings of peace to our children and children's children. Lechaim.

### **The Foreign Minister of Egypt:**

Mr. Prime Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to thank our host, the Prime Minister of Israel for his invitation and for the hospitality which was extended to us.

I thought after having, since the first day of the Political Committee meeting, that we were going to have a sort of relaxed and social event tonight, but the Prime Minister chose to bring words again on the subject of negotiation to this evening. I can only repeat that we believe that the basic elements of peace, of a positive peace, of a lasting peace, of a just peace is the element I stated very clearly this morning in my speech in the opening session of the political committee. As to the Prime Minister's views, well I think the place to discuss it is in the coming meeting which will start from tomorrow, in the meeting of the committee and I will keep my ideas to this meeting. Thank you very much Mr. Prime Minister, for your hospitality and for your greetings.

### **Mr. Begin:**

Thank you, my dear colleague and guest, Foreign Minister of Egypt, and now the discussion will be wound up by the Secretary of state.

### **Secretary Vance:**

Your Excellency, Mr. Prime Minister, Mrs. Begin, Your Excellency Foreign Minister Kamal, Your Excellency Foreign Minister Dayan and Mrs. Dayan, distinguished guests, this is my fifth visit to this beautiful and historic city in the period of just one year that I have been the Secretary of State. This visit is a very special one. What makes it special is that today the Foreign Ministers of Israel and Egypt have begun the process of serious direct substantive negotiations, and all of us have a sense of the importance of this day and of this moment.

The meetings which we began today will have to deal with many difficult and serious issues which will affect the national interest of all parties. We have before us an historic opportunity for peace and we know this opportunity must be seized or it may slip from our grasp. But we must ever keep in mind that no truly important problem is ever solved without perseverance, hard work and flexibility on both sides. I'm sure that in the work which began today we will have times of success and moments of difficulties. We must build on the momentum which has been created and not allow moments of difficulty to discourage us. We must keep constantly in front of us the goal which all of us see namely a just and lasting peace.

Let me conclude with a very brief personal observation. The direct contacts that are now taking place offer the opportunity for a new dimension that has been absent in all past efforts to resolve this conflict. I refer to the opportunity to listen, and to make a genuine effort to understand the perceptions and the points of view of others. The importance of this new dimension should not be underestimated.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask you to raise your glasses to the two great leaders to whose statesmanship we owe our presence here this evening, Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat. Let us take inspiration from their courage, their vision and dedicate ourselves to the task that they have put in our hands.

**111. Israel Government statement following breakdown of Political Committee talks, 19 January 1978.**

*In an unexpected move, President Sadat ordered the Egyptian delegation back to Cairo from Jerusalem as the talks of the Political Committee were in their second day. The move, not anticipated by any of the participants in the talks, caught the Egyptian delegation by surprise. As some progress was being made, Israel and the U.S. could not understand the reasons that motivated Sadat to break off the talks. The next day Israel issued a statement:*

The Government of Israel noted with regret the announcement of the Egyptian Government as to the sudden suspension of the negotiations within the framework of the political committee. This abrupt Egyptian announcement proves once more that the Egyptian Government was under the illusion that Israel would surrender to demands that at no time were acceptable to Israel. The Egyptian delegation demanded of the Israeli delegation the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai, the Golan, Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The Egyptian Foreign Minister, on his arrival in Israel, did not hesitate to demand that Israel transfer the Old City of Jerusalem to foreign rule, and further demanded the establishment of a Palestinian state in the territory of Eretz Yisrael in Judea, Samaria, and in Gaza. Such a Palestinian state would have extinguished any prospect of peace, and would have created a danger to the very existence of the Jewish state.

There has never been, and there will never be, a government in Israel that would agree to such conditions. However, the Government of Israel, which strives for a real peace, has proved its willingness by presenting a peace plan that was received positively by all those who have seen it. The Israeli peace plan was presented on 17 December to President Carter and his advisors. Secretary of State Vance declared in an official communique that it is a "notable contribution" and that it contains a constructive approach. President Carter announced on 28 December 1977 that the Israeli peace plan contains "a great deal of flexibility" and that it is "a long step forward." Former President Ford and ranking senators, including the leader of the majority in Congress and British Prime Minister Mr. Callaghan, have declared that it is a most constructive plan. It is only the Egyptian Government, in its astonishing intransigence, that sees the plan as "delaying tactics" and "deceit," and which decided, in the midst of this early stage of the negotiations on a "declaration of principles," to suspend the talks. We did not put any preconditions. We did not make any discussion on Egyptian proposals conditional on their acceptance of ours. As in all negotiations, there was an exchange of proposals and counter-proposals. Israel will continue to strive for the establishment of a permanent and just peace with her neighbours. Should the Egyptian Government decide to renew the negotiations, Israel will be willing to do so.

**112. Statement by Prime Minister Begin to a Keren Hayesod study group from France, 19 January 1978.**

*A day after the departure of the Egyptian delegation from Jerusalem, Mr. Begin explained to a French Jewry group the evolution of the talks he held with President Sadat in*

*Ismailiya on the issues of the demilitarization of Sinai, the future of the Israeli settlements there, and the proposed autonomy plan for the West Bank and Gaza. He described the discrepancies in the Egyptian position during and after the Ismailiya summit and expressed hope that the talks between Israel and Egypt would continue. Text:*

Mr. Chairman, our dear friend Baron Rothschild, Ladies and Gentlemen of the dais, our dear honoured guests from France: Israel elaborated, produced and presented the peace plan in two parts. The first concerns the bilateral relations between our country and Egypt, with two main principles: One, demilitarization of the Sinai desert, which must never again become a *place d'armes* to attack our land, as it happened five times in 29 years.

When President Sadat visited Jerusalem, he promised me in a private conversation that the Egyptian army will not pass the Giddi and the Mitla passes to the East, and so the main part of the Sinai peninsula will be demilitarized. To us, it is a most vital issue of our national security. We must have a belt of security, as a result of the experience of a generation, in order to prevent another war from breaking out and in order to be able to defend ourselves from attack.

But the military experts of Egypt presented a different map, not in conformity but in contradiction to the personal pledge given to me by President Sadat. In accordance with their plan, the bulk of the Sinai peninsula would be demilitarized.

We, of course, cannot agree to such a concept which may prove most dangerous to our future. I repeat, for the sake of peace, for both nations, the desert of Sinai must be demilitarized.

The second principle concerns our settlements in the very narrow strip in the North of Sinai between Rafa and El Arish. This is also one of the most vital issues of our national security. And, of course, there is no Government in Israel which would be capable to order dismantling of Jewish settlements in which so much sweat and toil were invested, making the desert blossoming. No land was taken away from anybody. When our settlers came there, it was a complete desert, sand and sand and nothing else. We brought water from the north and our men tilled the land and now it is almost a garden. Green, producing. We are not going to destroy the fruit of the labour of our men at the whim of the Egyptian Government.

When I met President Sadat at Ismailiya, I told him that those settlements are going to stay. Lately, again yesterday, the controlled or directed Egyptian press claimed that at Ismailiya I misled President Sadat, and therefore, they put on me a new label and they call me "Shylock". Well, I and lending money, of course, we pay attention to the fact that the Egyptian directed press uses an old anti-semitic expression which wanders throughout Europe since Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice". But, did I mislead President Sadat? I have no right to quote from the minutes whatever he told me, but I am perfectly entitled to disclose to you what I told him, and now I quote from the minutes of our conversation at Ismailiya. I told the President of Egypt, "I have to point out that we cannot leave our settlements and our civilians without self-defence, this is the resolve of our generation, with all the experience behind us. Mr. President, we respect your principle and we ask you to respect our principle."

As you can see, at Ismailiya, I told President Sadat not only that the settlements will stay but they will be defined by an Israeli contingent.

This is in the main the first part of our peace plan.

The second part related to the Autonomy, Administrative Autonomy, which we

suggest to give our neighbours, the Palestinian Arabs, residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District. Ladies and Gentlemen, this will be for the first time in history that the Palestinian Arabs residing in those parts of the Land of Israel will enjoy self-rule. For centuries they lived under the oppressive Turkish rule. For three decades under the British rule, for 20 years under Jordanian rule, which was very oppressive, indeed. The Jordanians ruled the Palestinian Arabs in Judea and Samaria with a whip. It never occurred to them to suggest self-determination. It never occurred to them to propose autonomy.

The same applies to Egyptian rule in the district of Gaza. They ruled the Arabs there directly for 19 years. They never gave them Egyptian citizenship and they let them live in the most horrible, abominable slums for two decades. We take out the people from those slums and give them proper, civilized housing and permanent jobs and so we shall go on doing in order to solve humanely the problem also of the Arab refugees who are under our jurisdiction.

For the first time in history comes Israel and suggests to the Palestinian Arabs to enjoy Self-Rule Autonomy based on the following principles: They themselves in a secret ballot, through a democratic election, will elect an 11-member Council with 11 departments, which will deal with all the problems of daily life. We shall not interfere to any extent whatsoever in the daily life of our neighbours. Security and public order must be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities, because if we should not have control of security, the so-called P.L.O., that murderous, Nazi organization, the baser of which there has never been in history, since and except and beside the armoured Nazi organization, would take over Judea and Samaria in 24 hours. Then we would face mortal danger. Almost all our civilians, men, women and children, would be at their mercy. With their Strellas and Kalachnikovs and Katyushas and heavy guns with a range of 43.8 kms to be supplied by the Soviet Union in no time from Odessa to Bethlehem. The flight time between those two cities being only two hours. It would turn into a Soviet base, like it happened in Angola and in Mozambique and in Ethiopia. Indeed, when I told President Sadat that some of the P.L.O. members are Soviet agents, he corrected me and said: "All of them."

Ladies and Gentlemen: It would turn into a Soviet base. A mortal danger to us, to the Jewish State. We would then place all our civilians in Gush Dan—Tel Aviv, Jaffa, Rehovot, Rishon L'Zion, Nes Ziona, B'nei Brak, Ramat Gan, Petach Tikva, Givatayim—almost 2 and half million Jews. The remnant of our people, those who were saved from the Holocaust, under the range of their conventional artillery, under the control of our most implacable enemy, since the dark days of the Nazis.

May I tell you, Ladies and Gentlemen, never shall we place our women and children in the range of the implacable enemy of the Jewish people. Never.

But we produced a plan of human decency. Autonomy, for the Palestinian Arabs. Security for the Palestinian Jews. We can live together and build together the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, with this plan in its two parts, I went to Washington a month ago. I presented it to the President of the United States, to the Secretary of State, to the ranking Senators: Senator Jackson, Senator Case. Both parties: the Democratic and the Republican, represented by them. Senator Javits and Senator Stone. To the former President of the United States, Mr. Gerald Ford. To the former Secretary of State, Mr. Kissinger. To the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, to the representative of the mighty Jewish Community in the United States — God bless them all. We are proud of the Jewish Community in the United States and then may I tell you, Ladies and Gentlemen, that we are proud of the Jewish Community in France.

Then I went to London and presented the plan to the Prime Minister of Great Britain and to the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain. Also Mr. Francois Poncet saw our peace plan but until now I didn't get from him any opinion, whereas all those who saw this peace plan said — now I quote — the Secretary of State of the United States read our a communique in which he stated: "It is a notable contribution. It is a constructive approach." President Carter, our friend, said, having listened to my presentation and seen the maps with all the details, including the question of the Jewish settlements: "There is a great deal of flexibility in this plan. It is a long step forward."

Some people say that the Egyptian Government decided yesterday to recall their delegation so that there should be pressure, American pressure extended on Israel. Ladies and Gentlemen, what pressure? Can a "notable contribution" become otherwise in four weeks? Can a "constructive approach" become negative in one month? Can a "great deal of flexibility" turn into "inflexibility"? And can a "long step forward" be turned into a "short step backwards?" All in several weeks? It is absolutely inconceivable. And they will never frighten us with this inconceivable concept of pressure to be exerted upon us.

We presented a positive plan. A human plan. A decent plan. A real peace plan. Far-reaching, sweeping. No pressure can be exerted on us to turn fairness into unfairness. Decency into indecency.

However, during the week, three days ago, came to us the Foreign Minister of Egypt, a likable man, I like him, I told him so. And upon landing on our land, made a statement at Ben Gurion airport to the effect that we must give up Jerusalem. So he said: He just landed and told us: You will have to give up Jerusalem. Jerusalem. May I tell you, Ladies and Gentlemen, it was the most preposterous statement ever made by a guest. Imagine I come to France and say that Paris should be divided into two. The very same day I will be asked to leave France. But I wouldn't make such a statement. I said it is a preposterous statement for a guest to make. But I have another word: In the language of Corneille and Baudelaire and Descartes and Proust. In classical French, it means "*Hutzpah*".

We didn't ask the Foreign Minister of Egypt to leave our country after that *hutzpadike* statement. On the contrary. We received him with hospitality and we started negotiations which were quite successful. Out of seven paragraphs of a declaration of principles, we agreed to five. Two were left out, for further negotiations, and suddenly he was recalled.

Of course, it was not only our right but our duty to answer that statement as I did. I would do it at any opportunity, as Prime Minister of Israel. It was my duty to explain to the Foreign Minister of Egypt that Jerusalem, the heart of the Jewish people, was occupied by the Jordanians for 19 years as a result of invasion and aggression, and for 19 years we couldn't go to pray, to the Holiest of the Holiest of the Jewish People and when we were attacked 11 years ago, with God's help, our men liberated Jerusalem. Everybody can go now to pray at the Holy Shrines of his religion, Christians, Moslems and Jews. And so Jerusalem was reunited and it will be united, the Capital city of Israel and the Jewish People forever and ever.

When I met yesterday a group of Egyptian journalists, I started to understand what happened. Amongst the many questions they asked me, not all of them polite, but we play it cool, there was the following question: You should recognize the fact, Mr. Prime Minister, that President Sadat recognized your right to survive. Shalom Aleichem. You recognized our right to survive.

Ladies and Gentlemen. We never have asked anybody to recognize our right to exist. Descartes made his famous scientific great saying, "*Cogito Ergo Sum*". I think, therefore,



I exist. He left to us, to say, because this is our history — I suffered, therefore I exist, I struggle, therefore I exist, and I believe, therefore I exist. "*Credo Ergo Sum*" but we exist. Our dear Egyptian friends, without your recognition, for 3,700 years, even without your recognition we left Egypt in order to exist in the land of our forefathers, promised to us by God and man. We never asked your President or your Government or any other President or a General or a nation to recognize our right to exist. We asked ever to recognize the right to France to exist? The right of Belgium to exist? Of Luxembourg to exist? We exist. Therefore, we have a right to exist. We pay the price for that. What a price. Up to this generation. That does not diminish our right to exist. To the contrary, what we expect from you is to recognize our right to our land, as we recognize your right to 21 sovereignty states, stretching from the Persian Gulf up to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, 12 million square kms. You should recognize our right to this land we have, the little country, as the expression of the right of national self-determination for the Jewish People, victimized, persecuted, humiliated, ultimately physically destroyed, and at last, having come back — back — we expect you to recognize our right to our independence and to our human dignity and to our sovereignty. We never asked you to recognize our right to exist. We have it. The right to exist was given to us by Elohey Avraham, Yitzhak and Ya'acov.

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, the talks within the framework of the political committee in Jerusalem were disrupted. We are sorry. We can only say we shall pursue our goal for peace. We yearn and pray for peace. We produced a good peace plan. We want peace with all our neighbours, to the South in Egypt, we respect the people of Egypt. We tell them, if we had peace, we can help each other, we do not say so condescendingly. We don't have any superiority complex over the Arabs. We respect the great Arab people and their contribution to human civilization. But neither do we have an inferiority complex, we too contributed to human civilization, we can help each other.

And we want peace with our Northern neighbours and in the East we want real peace. We shall pursue this noble goal. We hope that the talks will be resumed, it is up to Egypt. If the Egyptian Government should at any day decide to renew, resume, the talks, the Government of Israel will be prepared to do so as well.

And let nobody despair of the chances of peace. Ultimately, ups and downs and crises, and walking out and coming back, Ladies and Gentlemen, we learned from history: War is evitable, peace is inevitable.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have a special appeal to make to you. Make an effort, a unique effort, and it will be earmarked for a great human, noble purpose. We have still in this country 45,000 families living in the most abject housing conditions, 3-5-7 people in one room. How can the children study? And there are other phenomena of family life under such conditions which all adults here understand. I do not have to explain. This is that poverty which is a shame for any society. We are a Jewish society. We are a people who got the command in the days immemorial: Justice. Justice shall ye pursue, we cannot acquiesce in this horrible, abominable, intolerable poverty. We want to build for them proper, civilized houses and let the children be happy and smile and study and advance in life, 300,000 people. I made an appeal to the Bonds organization, to the Keren Hayesod, to the United Jewish Campaign: Let us all make an effort. The Jewish People in the Diaspora and our people in this country, and together we shall solve the problem, in a few years. It cannot be done in a week or a month. We need a few years. Three, four years, if we make this effort, the apartments will be built. When you come again, as you will, we shall bring you

to those apartments and you will listen to the laughter of a Jewish child. It will not be for a nobler purpose.

Therefore, I appeal to you, make an effort. Any amount above your contribution last year, or last years, will be earmarked *Kodesh*, for this purpose. And if you make the effort and we shall match it here, in a few years, we shall solve completely this economic-social — no, moral problem, and you will be happy in sharing in this human solution.

So, today, I appeal to you, make an effort, a special effort, a great one, and you will have the great “*naches*” when the day comes and those families are happy in their apartments.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, let us stand together. We may face difficult times. I tell you in French “*Kalt und Fest*”, strong and calm we shall stand. Ours is a good cause, a just cause. We hate war. We hate bloodshed. We want peace. We made a step forward, it is a long step forward, it will come. Let us stand together. Jews all over the world with the Jews in Eretz Yisrael. Let us stand together and make this land of ours strong, unconquerable, its people and its army invincible, and make sure that Israel and her children and children’s children will live in security, in peace, in liberty, in justice from generation to generation, forever.

### 113. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel television, 20 January 1978.

*The focus of the interview was on the suspended talks of the Political Committee and the evaluations of Mr. Dayan as to the next moves. The Foreign Minister explained that Sadat has come up with a new formula, demanding that Israel give a prior commitment to withdraw from the territories before the negotiations could start. This was a departure from the discussions held both in Jerusalem and Ismailiya with Sadat and Israel could under no circumstances accept such a demand. Mr. Dayan felt that if there will be no change in the position of Egypt, the talks would be deadlocked and there could be a possibility of the U.S. applying pressure on Israel. Text:*

**Q.** Mr. Dayan, you were mentioned in a quote. I am not sure of its accuracy, at the close of Mr. Sadat’s speech, when he was questioned by our correspondent about the matter of arrogance. Is this situation in which we find ourselves, a competition in arrogance and haughtiness?

**A.** I don’t think so, and neither can one conclude that from what Sadat said, as I heard it. He wants an Israeli promise to remove our settlements from Egyptian land, the Rafiah Salient, before renewal of the political committee discussions.

**Q.** There is a question of clarification on this point, which seems very odd. The Egyptians, if I am not mistaken, demanded that the subject of the Rafiah Salient settlements be transferred to the Military Committee.

**A.** No. Perhaps I should go back to what I had wanted to say. When the Political Committee was established, when the meeting in Ismailiya was held, or before that. Sadat never said ‘I have nothing to discuss with you before you announce that you are prepared to remove the settlements.’ According to the conception which he now puts forth — ‘First

of all, before the discussions you must announce that you are getting off our land, that is to say, removing the settlements' — then he should have said that before Ismailiya, before the political committee in Israel — and not, as we assumed, and though that he too assumed — that there is a reality. The result of a war, the '67 war which the Egyptians started (Nasser was President then). There are various problems, military, civilian and political, and we will discuss them. Of course he can, during these discussions, demand the removal of the settlements, and we do not deny his right to make such a demand. We are not saying that we will not discuss this matter, but if he wants us to say before the discussions, that we commit ourselves to that — first, he should have said so prior to Jerusalem and before Ismailiya and so on. And second, in principle — and I say that to this credit, and we said that in writing as well — this principle applies to the Golan Heights and to Judea and Samaria and Gaza, and — he emphasized that in the Knesset — it applies to Jerusalem as well. According to his logic, what the Arabs took from us by force in 1948 (when they defeated us in the Old City), Mount Scopus and the Jewish Quarter. We must return because that is the line which they had held until '67 and that is the same Arab sovereignty, and they deserve it. How do they deserve it? They took it by force.

Let us return to the main question: What is to be, and what does he propose. If he is really proposing prior commitment on subjects about which a discussion must be held, then it looks to me like a dead end.

**Q.** Let us say, if his demand remains unchanged, and, of course, the Israeli Government's position also remains unchanged. Is that the end?

**A.** If in fact he will want the Israeli Government to announce ahead of time, without discussions, that she is removing the settlements, and military airfields as well — and according to the paper they presented, the same applies to the Golan Heights and to Jerusalem as well — I assume that the Israeli Government's answer will be negative. If he says 'In that case we have nothing to discuss' then our answer will be 'that is what should be discussed. That is what we must discuss, and if he then says 'we have nothing to discuss' — it is possible that there would be no discussions.

**Q.** In your opinion, was his last step influenced to a certain extent by pressure from the other Arab countries?

**A.** I think so. But it is somewhat difficult for me, in my present position, to interpret, and to say for him, what it is that motivated Sadat to hold such a position. His position has changed measurably since the period of the first contacts. And the contacts prior to the meeting with Sadat, with his advisers, when we presented them with our programmes, including settlements, and we haven't changed a thing in them for the worse since then. At that time their approach was that this could be a basis for negotiations, not that they agree with it, but they said 'there is a reality. There is an Israeli army in Egypt and in Sharm el Sheikh. There are settlements. There is a notable difference between his approach at that time and what I have heard now, fact is that their delegation here, which we asked them what happened, did not dare to interpret because they didn't have the information and they said 'Media, Media' that is to say, pressures from the press. I had a sort of seminar with them, very enlightening, 'till 05.30, in Lod airport, in which they spoke more freely, where I asked them 'what's pressuring you?' And it really was a combination of the two: Other Arab states and the media.

**Q.** To be, perhaps, more specific on this point: Do you think that the interpretations which was given in the Arab states to the fact that Egypt accepted the U.S. compromise

suggestion on the issue of the agenda for the Jerusalem Conference, which seems to them a humiliating Egyptian surrender. Did this, specifically, have any influence?

A. This too had an influence, that is an example which was quoted. Today they published not the published proposal, but the paper which they had presented, from which we had long ago progressed towards a compromise. They published the paper which demands from us a withdrawal from the Golan Heights and so on. They said that there is a harsh and negative reaction in the Arab countries to the fact that they had agreed, let us say, that instead of writing in the agenda, as they had demanded, 'Israeli withdrawal from the territories conquered by her' it shall be written 'discussion of the principles of 242.'

The other factor, which is no less important, is the accumulation of time. Two months have passed, the Arab countries, and the press which attacks them are saying how far did you get? Actually, how far did you get since Sadat's visit to Jerusalem? Are you any closer to achieving those aims, from which you, Sadat, said you would not withdraw: an independent Palestinian State and withdrawal from all the territories?' This too caused them to, as they put it, restudy the political committee method, something which drags on and meanwhile bears no fruit.

Q. It was frequently said that Sadat counted on a harsher U.S. attitude toward Israel, on a more active collaboration of the Secretary of State. In your opinion, have the Americans these days, either in a practical or a formal way taken the role of mediator which they once held but no longer do?

A. The Americans were definitely very active. More than ever. They also said that in the past they had tried only to mediate between the sides and now they bring their own proposals as well, when it becomes apparent to them that there is no way to bridge the differences between the sides. They say that they have a suggestion of their own. Really, they play a crucial, in my opinion, constructive role.

Q. Are you not afraid of U.S. pressure on Israel?

A. Yes indeed I am. The question is whether we can make more progress in reaching peace arrangements with Egypt in another way, on this globe. The Super Powers, the USSR — even the European position is not more comfortable for us — and they have no influence on Egypt. And the U.S. does have influence on Egypt. I am afraid that without the U.S. we should not have succeeded, in the direct talks, to overcome the gap between our positions and those of Egypt. It is possible that we will face a conflict with American demands which we will not be able to accept. Then we will be in conflict with them, and we will say 'This we do not accept.' I suppose that this is a possibility, and I assume that we can withstand it. But along the way, without U.S. mediation and her suggestions, and the weight which her suggestions carry in Cairo with Egypt, without those I find it difficult to imagine how we will make progress with Egypt.

Q. Earlier you said that Sadat is actually referring to this matter of declarations, the battle of declarations, as a central thing which motivated him. At the same time, when you look back, don't you, to a certain extent, regret the public announcements which you and the Prime Minister have made, which may have, allegedly or in fact insulted the Egyptians?

A. It is easy to regret someone else's announcements, and that I do not do. But of all people on earth, President Sadat has less right to make such objections: Calling the Prime Minister Shylock, giving the sort of interview he gave to the periodical October. He does not mince his declarations. Listen to what he said today: Arrogant, and so on. I do not think that the quote from Mr. Begin which he used was accurate. I started officially to work as Chairman of the political committee upon the arrival of the Egyptian Foreign

Minister. I spoke pleasantly only, but he said what he said, words of attack. That cannot be one sided.

**Q.** He looks really insulted. Do you think he is acting?

**A.** I am no expert on acting. I think he really has that kind of conception, his understanding says 'Yes, I come to you Jerusalem, and in return you must give me a simple declaration which says 'Yes, President Sadat, we are prepared, in exchange for the peace which Egypt is willing to make with us, to withdraw from all the territories, including the Golan Heights and Jerusalem, and to grant the Arabs the right to establish an independent Palestinian State'. By the way, when he says 'In return for peace.' he sometimes means complete peace, with diplomatic relations. But in the papers which they introduced in the political committee, and in his Knesset speech, he was much more cautious, and spoke only of the U.N. charter, in which no obligation to maintain diplomatic or economic relations is mentioned. And he is not promising these in return. I think that is what he really wants: 'In exchange for this give me that.' I think, begging his pardon, that his demands are somewhat absurd: To say, 'Rely on me, as far as your security is concerned' considering the relations between him and the President of Syria... let us assume that he can guarantee, in the name of Egypt, that we abandon all the air-fields, the settlements and Sharm el Sheikh, and then have security on the Egyptian border. But to say leave the Golan Heights, rely upon me for your security on the Northern border as well'? Can he speak in Assad's name?

**Q.** Mr. Dayan, do you not feel some discomfort because for the past two months. Anwar Sadat is the man who determined almost all the moves and their timing? He determined how many breaks there will be between one procedure and the next, and object to things dragging out, and sets up the next moves. Don't you feel uncomfortable with that?

**A.** For thirty years I have felt discomfort because we have sought peace, and have announced each time — and with each Prime Minister — that our hand is outstretched with honest intentions. Every Prime Minister has announced that he was willing to go anywhere, anytime to discuss peace. He was usually answered with silence, or with a contradiction. In this situation, where Israel has a permanent willingness for peace, when do talks take place? When one of the Arab leaders is ready, of course.

**Q.** This explains the first step, but since then two months and many moves have passed.

**A.** The Prime Minister was prepared to go to the Egyptian Parliament. They were not interested.

**Q.** I'm talking about initiatives, not invitations.

**A.** To force ourselves on them? We can take simple initiatives. We can stop.

**Q.** Can we do that vis-a-vis the Military Committee?

**A.** As far as the Military Committee is concerned, a decision will be made in the Government on Sunday, following President Sadat's speech and more importantly, Atherton's report about the talks between Vance and Sadat. That is when we will decide. We are an experienced and wise people, and the question is, what's next, will we progress further toward peace without talks? I think he too will face this question. He will call back the political committee, and then Egypt will attain her goal more easily, without discussion. If she were able to attain them by military means, he would have come to these talks.

#### **114. Israel cabinet communiqué, 22 January 1978.**

*Since the breakdown of the Jerusalem talks, the Egyptian press engaged in a major campaign of vilification of Israel, its leaders and the Jewish people. On 21 January, President Sadat addressed the Egyptian People's Assembly and while he said that he was leaving the door open for renewed peace talks, he demanded that Israel accept the Egyptian position of Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders and the rights of Palestinians to self-determination before the talks could continue. The next day the Israel government met and decided to postpone the departure of the delegation for the talks of the Military Committee. Text:*

At the Ismailiya conference an agreement was reached between the President of Egypt and the Prime Minister of Israel to constitute a Military and a Political committee in Cairo and in Jerusalem for the continuation of the negotiations between the two countries. Since that conference and before the negotiations started within the framework of the Political Committee in Jerusalem a campaign of grave vilification against the State and the government of Israel was launched in Egypt. Egyptian newspapers even used notorious anti-semitic expressions. Whilst the political committee was deliberating and making progress towards an agreement on a joint declaration of principles, President Sadat suddenly decided to recall the Egyptian delegation to Cairo. Thus were disrupted the negotiations in the Political Committee in which the Secretary of State of the United States participated too.

Before the Egyptian People's Assembly, President Sadat made an extremist aggressive speech and addressed to Israel ultimative demands that are totally unacceptable to Israel.

Facing this situation, the government of Israel decided to postpone the date of departure of the Israeli delegation to the discussions of the Military Committee in Cairo. The government of Israel will in the near future discuss again the issue of the departure of the Israeli delegation to the Military Committee in Cairo.

We do hope that in the coming days the Egyptian government will act to prevent repetition of statements injurious to the dignity of the Jewish people and the Jewish state, thus creating a suitable atmosphere for the calm conduct of negotiations in which Israel continues to be interested.

The Prime Minister will tomorrow make a statement to the Knesset in which he will respond to President Sadat's speech.

#### **115. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin, and his reply, 23 January 1978.**

*In the wake of the suspension of the Israel-Egypt negotiations, and the Cabinet's decision to postpone the departure for Egypt of the Israeli delegation to the Military Committee, the Prime Minister explained to the Knesset the evolution of the events from Ismailiya to the Egyptian decision to recall its delegation from Jerusalem. He outlined the declaration of principles which was the focus of the talks in Jerusalem and said that the Israeli position on the talks is simple: they could continue if Egypt stops its campaign against the dignity of the Jewish people and Israel. In his reply to the debate which ensued, the Prime Minister castigated the members of the Knesset who felt that Israeli actions and words contributed also to the breakdown of the talks. Highlights of the speech and text of the reply follow:*

On 9 November 1977, President Sadat told the people's Assembly of Egypt that he might be prepared to come to Jerusalem and address our parliament. He stressed that his demands would be total Israeli withdrawal to the lines which preceded the Six-day War of 1967, and the establishment of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District.

On the following day, 10 November 1977, I published a statement which said, *inter alia*:

*"Israel categorically and absolutely rejects the conditions named by President Sadat — i.e., total withdrawal to the June 1967 lines, and the establishment of a so-called Palestinian state. These terms, it is known, would constitute a danger to the very existence of the State of Israel. However, President Sadat can put forward this position at the Geneva Conference. Let no party turn its own stand into a prior condition for participating in the peace conference."*

Ten days later, President Sadat came to our country and delivered his speech from the rostrum of our Knesset. In doing so, he knew in advance that his two demands were, are, and will be, completely unacceptable to Israel. It was with this knowledge that he carried out his visit.

In Jerusalem, President Sadat gave me a pledge that the Egyptian army would not cross the line of the Giddi and the Mitla Passes. Hence, the remainder of the Sinai Desert would be completely demilitarized from the line of the passes to the international boundary, to which we would ultimately withdraw our forces after a transitional period of between three and five years. However, General Gamasy proposed to Defence Minister Ezer Weizman a different line from which the demilitarization would begin. The distance between the line of the Giddi and Mitla Passes and the international boundary is 180 to 200 kilometres, whereas the distance between General Gamasy's proposed line and the international boundary is 40 kilometres. The disparity, therefore, between the demilitarization line as indicated to me by President Sadat and that stated by General Gamasy represents a difference of between 140 and 160 kilometres.

To us, this is one of the most vital issues of our national security. No amount of rhetoric can change the indisputable fact that the Sinai Desert served as a staging ground to attack Israel, and to threaten it with destruction, five times in 30 years. This can never ever be again. And, therefore, during negotiations for a peace treaty, we shall stand steadfastly by the positive, crucial principle of the complete demilitarization of the Sinai Peninsula stretching from the Giddi and Mitla Passes to the international boundary. And, as this was the clear pledge given to me by President Sadat, I call upon him, for the sake of credibility, to instruct his military staff to abide by his undertaking.

At the Ismailiya Conference on 25 and 26 December 1977, I presented to President Sadat and his delegation our peace proposal in both its parts. The part relating to the bilateral relations between Israel and Egypt based itself, *inter alia*, upon the principles of demilitarization, a transition period, a UN force and flag in the area between Sharm el-Sheikh and Eilat and in the area between Rafah and El-Arish, and ultimate Israeli withdrawal to the international boundary. That proposal included the principle of self-defence for our settlements in their existing locations.

The relevant passage in the transcript of the Ismailiya conference reads, I quote: *"We cannot — even as we respect your dignity and your honour — we cannot leave our settlements and our civilians without self-defence. This is the resolve of our generation, with all*

*our experience behind us. We respect your principles and we ask you to respect our principle."*

President Sadat's reaction to the Egyptian-Israeli part of our peace proposal, including the passage I have just quoted, was, and I repeat his words: *"Let me say that, with this, you have made your proposal. We have to discuss it and form our proposal also, through negotiation, and reach results, because, as you stated clearly, you have difficulties and we have difficulties. There are points we differ on. The proper way is to exchange proposals and discuss them. For me it is a success, our meeting here, whatever the differences are."*

Minister of Defence Ezer Weizman reported, of course, to me and to the cabinet about his previous talk with President Sadat at Aswan, in which the President objected to our settlements. The President repeated his objection during our meeting in Ismailiya. But it was all done in a friendly atmosphere, both sides understanding and saying that it is a matter for discussion and negotiation.

When, in Ismailiya, I presented to President Sadat our draft for a common Egyptian-Israeli declaration of principles, his reaction was — "For the Egyptian people, it is enough." He added that he had other problems as well, and I understood.

I suggested that the Egyptian delegation work out a counter-proposal, and they did. We discussed both drafts at the Ismailiya talks. We, on our part, told the Egyptians that we cannot, and will not, accept two paragraphs of their draft which referred to withdrawal of Israel from Sinai, the Golan, the West Bank and Gaza, and the achievement of a just settlement of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects on the basis of the right to self-determination.

Ultimately, the following declaration of principles was actually by both delegations. I quote:

1. *The Governments of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Israel are determined to continue their effort to reach a comprehensive peace settlement in the region.*
2. *Within the framework of such a settlement, they express their willingness to negotiate peace treaties, on the basis of the principles envisaged in the Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.*
3. *The two sides agreed that the establishment of the just and lasting peace requires the fulfilment of the following:*
  - a) *withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories in the 1967 conflict;*
  - b) *termination of all claims or states of belligerency, and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure boundaries, free from threats or acts of force;*
  - c) *guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;*
  - d) *achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;*
  - e) *guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones.*

With regard to the question of the Palestinian Arabs, no agreement was reached. Both delegations accepted the practice of stating their respective position and, indeed, President Sadat, at our subsequent joint press conference, read out the relevant statement: *"The posi-*



tion of Egypt is that, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a Palestinian state should be established. The position of Israel is that Palestinian Arabs residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip should enjoy self-rule."

It was because of the differing positions on this issue that the representatives of the Egyptian Foreign Office stated that the agreed written declaration of principles cannot be published. However, I must emphasize that, but for this, the contents of a common declaration of principles was, in fact, agreed upon by both sides.

Since the Ismailiya conference, and before the political committee assembled in Jerusalem, a most virulent campaign of vilification against Israel and its government was launched in Egypt. Thus, on 31 December 1977, the Egyptian newspaper *Akhbar al-Yom* saw fit to publish an article by Mustapha Amin under the heading: "*Begin should thank God that he was not beaten up by members of the Egyptian delegation in Ismailiya.*" The article states, and I quote: "*This meeting was not with representatives of the State of Israel, but with Shylock, the arms merchant (sic) in the well-known story by Shakespeare concerning the usurer who wanted a piece of flesh from his debtor.*"

Elsewhere, in that same piece, the writer states: "*The Egyptians were shocked when they heard the declaration of President Carter about his opposition to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. It appears that Carter insists upon continuing his international jig in which he takes two steps forward and one step back.*"

Again, in the Egyptian semi-official daily *Al-Ahram* of 3 January 1978, we find the heading: "*The Jew will bargain even with the angel of death — changing the character of the Jew is a drawn-out affair.*" The author, Annis Mansour, writes, *inter alia*, "*Drinking coffee together proves nothing. One can also have coffee in a zoo and a prisoner condemned to death is also given coffee.*"

Another quote: "*We know from the outset that sitting with Jews is to sit with the world's speculators of every generation.*"

Another quote: "*But the Jews, as is their habit, cast doubt on everything. Even if the devil, the angel of death, would come to them, they would bargain with him over every detail.*"

Another quote: "*But never let us forget that the Israelis are Israelis, that bargaining trickery and calculations of profit and loss are part of their character, and that they are incapable of changing themselves.*"

Another quote: "*The dream of Zionism, its ambition and philosophy, is the philosophy of Nazi Hitlerism. The reference is to its feeling of superiority and its right to rule over everyone round about and over the whole world, as stated in their holy book.*"

I could go on.

As you can see, these are not only notorious, anti-semitic expressions, but a repetition of what we used to read in "*Der Sturmer*." In such an atmosphere of hatred, and incitement to hatred against the Jewish people and the Jewish state, it would be useless and humiliating for our delegation to go to Cairo to participate in the talks of the Military Committee. We hope that, in the coming days, the Egyptian government will prevent the repetition of such outrageous statements, for which the Egyptian government is responsible under the prevailing conditions of that country.

I have to add a warning that, if they are repeated, and if this kind of vile language is continued, we shall not be in a position to send the representatives and spokesmen of the State of Israel to a place in which their people, their country and their government are so vilified. We want an atmosphere in which calm negotiations can be pursued. Israel con-

tinues to be interested in such negotiations. We hope that, in the coming days, such an atmosphere will be created in the Egyptian capital.

In his speech to the Council of the Egyptian People on 21 January, President Sadat stated again that Israel must commit itself to total withdrawal, and agree to a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District. It is my duty to say to President Sadat respectfully that, first: Resolution 242, with its careful wording "*withdrawal from territories occupied in the recent conflict*" (and not "all the territories" or "the territories"), does not in any way commit Israel to a total withdrawal; and, second: since the Six-Day War was, in the most classical sense, a war of legitimate national self-defence, threatened as we were not only with aggression but also with extinction during the days of May-June 1967, Israel enjoys two undeniable rights under international law and practice: one: in the absence of peace treaties, we stand where we are; and, two: territorial changes are completely legitimate and should be included in the peace treaties.

However, if against these rules of international law President Sadat insists on his totally unacceptable ultimata, it will inescapably be our understanding that he does not want Israel with peace, but peace without Israel.

It is my duty to inform him that the State of Israel will live forever, and it is with this Jewish state that our neighbours will have to conduct — honourably, decently and freely — negotiations, without any prior conditions from either side, for the conclusion of peace treaties.

As far as our peace proposals in both their parts are concerned — namely the Sinai peace plan, including the proposed arrangements for our settlements with an Israeli contingent to defend them, and the plan for administrative autonomy for the Palestinian Arabs residing in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District — I presented them to the President of the United States, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the President's Advisor on National Security, ranking Senators, the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, former President Ford, former Secretary of State Kissinger, and also the Prime Minister of Great Britain. All of them made public statements to the effect that the proposals are a fair basis for negotiation, and constitute a constructive approach. They also made positive statements to me in private, which I shall not divulge. However, the public statements do merit quotation, such as that of the President of the United States, who said: "*There is a great deal of flexibility* (in the Israeli peace proposals). *It is a long step forward;*" and that of Secretary of State Vance, who said: "*A constructive approach, a notable contribution.*"

So it is and so it remains.

### **Statement of reply by Prime Minister Begin.**

Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the leader of the opposition and other Knesset members who, whether fully or partially, supported the government decision and the statement made to explain it. The debate was thorough, fitting — I think it will help elucidate Israel's national stand. I say "National stand" because the matter must be presented in all its sharpness, all its logic, all its clarity.

Members of the Knesset, President Sadat is demanding that Israel undertake to him to leave the Golan Heights, quit Sinai and the Gaza Strip, abandon Judea and Samaria. On that condition he is ready to make with us what he calls peace. Let every Knesset member reply according to his conscience whether he be ready to sign such an undertaking. True,

there is here one faction which is definitely ready to accept these conditions, and I had the opportunity to say to President Sadat and his colleagues: Maybe you want an agreement with five Knesset members out of 120 — be it known to you, there is such a faction.

Truly, that is what I said to President Sadat: Maybe you want an agreement with five Knesset members out of 120. Under those conditions you can get it, but only with five Knesset members. All the other 115 Knesset members, each according to his awareness and his conscience — whatever faction he belongs to — must answer the question: Are you ready to accept these conditions as Sadat — excuse me, President Sadat — is presenting them. Explicitly, without embellishment, without qualification, without further ado. Reply. If you are not ready to do so, please do not hurl accusations.

What was a bit painful — not very, it can be lived with — is the tendency to self-accusation. This is not the sort of phenomenon that was to be found in the land of Israel. I know where it originated. Our people experienced difficult times, and there was always some Jew who said: 'Yes, true. They attacked, they carried out a pogrom etc... but the Jews were not altogether in order either.' Interestingly, the usual expression was 'Jewish provocation' — without that they would not have undergone what they did. All this we have left behind us, to bring that habit to the land of Israel to our country — strange.

Last night I heard how a Knesset member — not necessarily from the opposition — blamed the government of Israel for the breaking off of the Political Committee deliberations. Let me state the truth from my heart: I felt shame and disgrace, as a Jew. What did we do? We conducted negotiations. We proposed two committees, we expressed our stand, we put forth proposals, we drafted a peace plan. The discussion proceeded as it was supposed to: Proposals, counter-proposals. No, we are to blame. We are also to blame, it's not fitting.

And there were Knesset members who in the past few days set themselves up as though they were some kind of supreme arbiters: Before them are two sides. The government of Egypt and the government of Israel. Both are off the mark. Both are wrong. Both are mistaken. While these Knesset members stand above and expatiate and admonish and finally counsel: You are both out of line, henceforth you will both behave properly, and then you will get peace. This, too, is not becoming.

Members of the Knesset. There are not two sides here. You heard the remarks. Perhaps for the first time, an enemy castigating and vilifying the ranks of Israel — two sides: Remarks whose like we did not read in "Der Sturmer" since it appeared — two sides: An abrupt decision, right out of the blue, to break off negotiations in their midst — two sides: An order to pack bags, to return. Never was there such a thing in any negotiation. The U.S. Secretary of State, a partner to the negotiations, knew nothing, stands open-mouthed — two sides: What two sides do you have here?

And those Knesset members who spoke thus, are not part of this people but exclude themselves. Ascend the mount and sermonize? This they do to the same degree vis-a-vis the government of Israel and the government of Egypt? This, too, was not a custom which existed in the past. Here we are used to "Talk turkey," as the Sabras say. What self-accusation do you cast on the citizens of Israel or on the government which is running the affairs of your country? You are under no obligation to call it "Our government" — though we used to call you "Our government" when we were in the opposition. But to all intents this is the government of our country, what are you accusing it of? Surely you must base yourself on facts.

My dear friend Knesset member Lova Eliav, says to me: That speech, that speech. I

have learned from all my mentors, but I want to say to you, Lova: Let us imagine that I deliver precisely that speech and the Egyptian Foreign Minister reads his written speech and makes no comment and does not create the impression that he is insulted. Would it then occur to you to utter one word of criticism of my remarks? On the contrary, I want to inform you that, even though I do not need it, I received congratulations on my remarks from all directions, from all sides. Not just from Israelis, not just from Jews — from very important persons who are not Israelis and are not Jews, and I do not want to repeat their titles.

But what happened? The Egyptian Foreign Minister became confused — he does not deny it — and reacted as he did. He gave up the idea of reading his prepared speech, said a few sentences, sat down. Did not join in the toast as we did. The American Secretary of State and myself, to our country and its President. He sat. And then it was clear that he had a 'Sour Face', and it was against that background that all your critical remarks came up. Had he read his speech quietly, as he prepared it, and not evinced dissatisfaction over my remarks — and I shall yet explain why he showed dissatisfaction — no one would have even thought of asking: 'Why did Begin have to make that speech?'

I do not want to repeat my remarks, but I must say they contained no offence, no insult. What's wrong — are not such political statements made at a political dinner? And the remarks were made with courtesy, with fondness, and this was not a private dinner but a state dinner. I was told: But the Arabs have a different grasp of hospitality. Fine. Here, then, President Sadat, on Saturday evening, in a speech before his People's Assembly, when he invited the entire diplomatic corps, including the Russian Ambassador — and certainly they were all his guests, invited by him — said such things about the Soviet Union. Do you see? He said such grave things that even I could not say. He spoke of scoundrels, of frauds, so that the Soviet Ambassador, the guest of the President of Egypt, got up and left the hall.

Perhaps some Egyptians should have stood up and asked President Sadat: 'Mr. President, you invite the diplomatic corps, one of whom is the Soviet Ambassador, and this is how you vilify him and his country, in his presence? Is this hospitality? Is this how a guest is treated? But no one asked such a question. And here, because the stranger, the Egyptian, showed dissatisfaction. Several Jews stepped forward with a complaint, the stranger was not satisfied, and he said to himself: 'If so, my speech is already worthless, and I have to make a few remarks.' And he in fact said things which were hard to understand and then he sat down and did not join in the toast and the Jews are angry, at whom? At their comrade, at the Jew.

I wish to note the remarks of Mrs. Golda Meir. She was not swayed by some sour grimace of a guest, she said what was in her mind, in her awareness: No injustice was done by the Prime Minister, he insulted no one. On the contrary, the other party did not behave properly. Why did he not drink a toast to the President of Israel? It was his duty to do so, regardless of a political speech. That was discourtesy on his part.

We made no contentions about this. Why should you contend against your comrade, the Prime Minister? Members of the Knesset, this is not how one behaves in the land of Israel, that belongs to another era entirely.

Now Knesset member Haika Grossman comes to me with contentions — after she has already dealt with the chain of mistakes of the Israel government and reacted sharply to the speech etc. — and asserts that I did not act properly with regard to Judea and Samaria, that I yielded to pressures, etc, etc.

Well, then, I ask Knesset member Haika Grossman: What is to be done if there are fundamental differences between us concerning Judea and Samaria? We wrote openly in the plan—for all to see—and I so stated to the President of the United States and the President of Egypt: We lay claim to our right to Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Thus did I state at the White House. True, this was the first time an Israeli Prime Minister made such a statement to an American President. And thus did I also state in Ismailiya. We also transmitted such a document to the knowledge of the President of Egypt: We claim right and we have a claim to our sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza, for it is our land.

This we wrote. This we believe. True, for the sake of a peace agreement — as we once again stated openly — we propose leaving open the question of the application of sovereignty. But our right stands. Our claim stands. We do not forgo it. We propose, for the time being, dealing with peoples — thus I always say: The Jewish people and the Arab people, I have no need to resort to my memories from Hashomer Hatzair in order to say this. There are two peoples in the land of Israel. We recognize them both by law. There is written: Nationality, Arab nationality, Jewish nationality. That is an expression of freedom, an expression of democracy, an expression of recognition of nationality. True, this is not how it is in every country. But this is how it is here. We want to deal with two people, I have no need to resort to my memories from Hashomer Hatzair in order to say proposal. You perhaps agree neither with the claim nor the right. You have the right to object. But this is our plan and this is our path. Everything is clear and open. Nothing hidden, nothing mysterious — everything is clear.

Knesset member Moshe Shamir — to whose remarks I always listen carefully but am unable in this latest phase to agree with everything he says — proposed that we employ the great rule of international law and state that our peace plan is null and void. We cannot accept such advice. True, there is a famous rule in the international law-book: “A contract, in as much as it is a contract, requires mutual agreement of the parties. The proposals put forward by one party which are not accepted by the other party are not binding upon the proposer.” That is the rule. We shall not make use of it in order to announce that our peace plan no longer exists even if it has been rejected by the other party.

Our peace plan is good, thorough, thought-out, and afforded us — yes indeed — support of very important international factors, and we adhere to it. On the other hand, there is a question of particular concrete proposals, and certainly if we decide, I must express this reservation, we must give the matter thought, consider it, determine the proper timing for it. But we definitely have a legal right as regards the concrete proposals — once we have put forward a certain proposal and it has not been accepted or has been utterly rejected — to state: It is not binding upon the proposer and we shall submit another proposal. This requires no special explanation. It is familiar to anyone who knows the ABC's of international law. I want to say that this matter has definitely been discussed and will be part of the government's considerations. The cabinet has not yet decided on this question, but it will definitely be in the framework of its future deliberations.

I hope that nothing will be written in Egypt this week that may again offend the dignity of our nation and adversely affect the suitable atmosphere for conducting calm negotiations on the basis of proposals and counter-proposals, as is the custom in negotiations between countries. I hope that nothing will be said in Cairo which is liable to adversely affect this desirable atmosphere. It is my duty to explain that we shall not be able to decide to despatch our delegation if the remarks, as I read them, recur, for we shall not agree to any

offence to the dignity of the Jewish people or the Jewish state in the course of negotiations. We want negotiations. We are interested in them. I hope they can be resumed and continue, but let it be perfectly clear to everyone: without disparagements and without offence to our people. I hope that this atmosphere will in fact prevail this week, and then I hope that at the beginning of next week we will be able to decide on the despatch of our delegation for resumption of the negotiations. But all this is in the nature of the expression of a hope. We shall observe.

Finally, Mr. Speaker: President Sadat came to us. We received him with all befitting hospitality, we received him in recognition of his courageous deed and we never rescinded that recognition. But President Sadat, the President of Egypt, stated that we are called upon — as I have already noted — to withdraw to the lines of 4 June 1967, to leave the Golan Heights, to abandon Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Would he please take note that if he presents us with these demands, along with a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, then there is only one way we can interpret these unacceptable demands: He does not want Israel with peace. But peace without Israel, such a peace will be given to no one.

We insist that dignified, free negotiations, between equals, be conducted. There are no victors and no vanquished. No party speaks to his opposite as a victor and no party need speak to his opposite as vanquished. It is on the basis of total equality and mutual respect that we shall negotiate on the establishment of peace.

We want dignified negotiations, that is: Between the state of Israel and its neighbours to the South, the North and the East, for the establishment of peace in the Middle East and for the signing of a peace treaty between ourselves and our neighbours.

#### **116. Interview with Prime Minister Begin on Public Broadcasting Service Television, 25 January 1978.**

*While the talks were deadlocked, Assistant Secretary of State Atherton was asked by the parties to try and narrow the differences between them, especially on the declaration of principles. He travelled between Cairo and Jerusalem seeking an agreement. On 25 January both President Sadat and Foreign Minister Dayan said that Israel and Egypt were within reach of an agreement on the declaration of principles. On that day, the Prime Minister blamed Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials for pressuring Sadat to recall his delegation from Jerusalem. In this interview, excerpts of which follow, the Premier again described the talks he had with President Sadat in Ismailiya and of his position on the security of Israel.*

**Robert MacNeil:** Mr. Prime Minister, you told the Knesset last night that you would not resume negotiations with Egypt until the Egyptian press stopped its campaign of vilification. Can you give me some examples of that vilification?

**Prime Minister Begin:** I said that we hoped that the Egyptian President would not repeat the words of vilification against the Jewish people and the State of Israel and its government, and I really have such a hope. So, with that assumption, I may believe that next week we shall be able to send our delegation to Egypt to renew the talks within the fabric of the Military Committee. Of course, if that vilification is repeated, we shall have to draw the conclusion we spoke of. But let us hope for the best.

Now about the vilification itself. First of all, suddenly, during the negotiations, I am called “Shylock” in the Egyptian press. For three centuries, this word “Shylock” has been a catchword for all the anti-semites, including the Nazis.

**MacNeil:** How do you explain that you would suddenly become Shylock?

**Begin:** This is an outburst — unwarranted, unjustified. Only three weeks ago I was the hero of peace in the Egyptian press. When I came to Ismailiya, there was a placard, “Welcome to Begin, the hero of peace.” And, suddenly, somebody pushed a button — because it’s a directed, a controlled press — and said: attack.

There was another article in which they vilified the Jewish people, saying that to conduct negotiations with the Jews means to conduct negotiations with the “speculators of all generations.” This is Nazi language.

We now have a Jewish state. We’ve fought for our own liberation — at the cost of the best of our men. We, of course, want peace. We want negotiations, peace treaties. But nobody in this time of our national redemption can again vilify our people, the Jewish people, call them names, try to humiliate them, and then say: “Nothing happened. Come to Cairo. Let us negotiate.”

**MacNeil:** Is there any chance of the Political Committee resuming its negotiations soon?

**Begin:** We want to renew both committees. For the time being, the situation is that President Sadat suddenly — may I say, out of the blue — recalled the Egyptian delegation from the Political Committee. And it’s up to the two parties to reconvene that committee, in which both the Egyptians and the Israelis are represented. Meanwhile, we are willing to send our delegation to the Military Committee, because we want the negotiations to go on, provided we see during the week that there are no more “Shylocks” in the Egyptian press.

**MacNeil:** You say somebody pushed the button. Is it Mr. Sadat who pushed the button that started this campaign?

**Begin:** I can’t say, and I hope not. But it doesn’t change the situation. Surely it’s a directed press. I suppose that either the Propaganda Ministry, or the Foreign Office in Egypt pushed the button. There can be no other explanation for such a sudden outburst of the worst feelings, and for the use of the worst words we have known in centuries.

**MacNeil:** In the eyes of which nation, or nations, is Egypt trying to discredit you?

**Begin:** The Egyptian people themselves. And then, probably anti-Semites, who still dwell in certain countries. But, first of all, they intended to incite the Egyptian people against the Government of Israel, and against Israel, and then they tried actually to frighten us. You know: “If you don’t submit to the Egyptian demands, we shall call you names.” And then there was also a threat to make war on us. In one of the articles they said that I should remember that there might be another “October.” We call it the Yom Kippur War. They took us by surprise, it’s true, and we had a very difficult first few days, with hundreds of casualties of our best men, who had to defend our people literally with their bodies.

But when we overcame, and I don’t want to exacerbate the situation, but the fact is that our army came very close to the two capitals from which that war had started. To try to frighten us with another “October” is childish, and we can’t be impressed by threats of war. We want peace but, if attacked, we shall defend ourselves.

**MacNeil:** When you came back from the talks in Ismailiya, at Christmas time, you said that your relations with Mr. Sadat were warm and friendly and hospitable. Are they still?

**Begin:** I hope so. In Ismailiya we discussed problems in the most friendly atmosphere, and President Sadat stressed the fact that, even if we have differences of opinion, we shall keep our friendship and we shall discuss our problems, as it should be. Then there were two

interviews given by President Sadat to the weekly called October. The first was a good one; I read it, and I enjoyed it.

Then came the second October interview. What a difference! And yesterday our parliament asked theoretically: perhaps there are two Sadats? I don't know. Because he was a completely different man. For instance, saying that our peace proposal means to say to the Egyptian people: sleep, and I will kill you.

Well, that is, to use an understatement, an hyperbole which is absolutely incomprehensible. This is our peace plan. We suggested that Egypt would be in the Sinai Peninsula. It will be demilitarized, of course, so it will not become a base of aggression against us as it was until 1967, but we will leave the Sinai Peninsula. This was our suggestion. And then, to say that this peace plan means to lull them into sleep, and that we shall then come and kill the Egyptian people — well, this is not a rational statement, with all due respect.

**MacNeil:** Is Sadat completely in charge of these negotiations? Or is there some tension, or difference of opinion, between him and the Egyptian Foreign Office?

**Begin:** I'll tell you something of my own experience: President Sadat is the rules of Egypt; if he takes a decision, that's that.

For instance, I remember there was a discussion in the conference room at Ismailiya, when the representative of the Egyptian Foreign Office suggested that we should conduct negotiations about peace agreements. I said: we should negotiate "peace treaties," because a peace agreement is a very abstract concept. A peace treaty is concrete, under international law. The first paragraph in all peace treaties stipulates that the state of war has been terminated, and then follow the territorial issue, diplomatic relations, etc. And the man representing the Foreign Office of Egypt did not agree. "No," he said. "We cannot write 'peace treaties,' only 'peace agreements'."

President Sadat listened to the discussion, and he turned to the man from the Egyptian Foreign Office and said: "Write peace treaties." And that was the decision. The document we agreed upon included the term "peace treaties."

However, we learned that when it comes to formulations, to judicial problems, President Sadat is influenced by the people of the Egyptian Foreign Office. Because, as he says himself, he is not interested in details.

Details, may I say, are quite important. Napoleon Bonaparte used to say: "Care about the details. They are very important." But he, President Sadat, has got the general outlook, and he pursues a general policy.

**MacNeil:** You told the Knesset last night that President Sadat, when he was in Jerusalem, promised you that the Egyptian army would not advance beyond a certain line in the Sinai. But when it came to negotiations in the military committee, the Egyptian War Ministry had quite a different line. How do you explain that?

**Begin:** I will only explain this: in Jerusalem, President Sadat told me that the Egyptian army would not cross the line of the Gidi and Mitla Passes. The distance between this line and the international border to which, in accordance with our peace plan, the Israeli army should ultimately withdraw, as we agreed in advance, is between 180 and 200 kilometres. That was the pledge made by President Sadat.

Then, our Defence Minister, Ezer Weizman, goes to Egypt with the Chief of Staff. He presents a map in accordance with the pledge given to me by President Sadat, and General Gamassy, the War Minister of Egypt, presents his map and says: "there will be a demilitarized zone only 40 kilometres from the international border." In other words, a difference of 140 to 160 kilometres, as you can see, between the two lines. To us, that is a



world of difference. It is the difference between the Sinai Peninsula being remilitarized — or demilitarized.

**MacNeil:** But do these differences emerge just from Mr. Sadat's carelessness with detail or lack of interest in detail? Or does it represent some change of heart on his part?

**Begin:** I wouldn't go so far. But the fact is that he agreed with me on that line, and then, probably, when the plan came up for consideration before the generals of the Egyptian military staff, they reached a different conclusion. I cannot imagine that they would have proposed their plan without President Sadat's consent.

He probably had second thoughts on the subject, but he never denied the pledge given to me in Jerusalem. I brought our peace plan to Ismailiya, and read to him from the written text: "We base ourselves on the promise given by the President to the Prime Minister in Jerusalem, to the effect that the Egyptian army will not cross the Gidi and Mitla Passes." He didn't say one word. Neither he nor his advisor denied it.

Yesterday I called on President Sadat from the rostrum of the Knesset to keep his pledge; that is necessary for his own credibility. I hope he will.

**MacNeil:** How do you explain Mr. Sadat's charge that you deceived him over the Israeli settlements in the Sinai?

**Begin:** He didn't say so. Some of the newspapers said that I misled him. Sadat never said that I even misled him. What he said in his speech was: it is true that the Prime Minister of Israel brought me the plan, including the question of the settlements, but two days earlier I met Ezer Weizman, the Defence Minister of Israel, and I told him that I would not accept those settlements. And that statement is true in both parts: namely, he met the Defence Minister of Israel, and he told him that he would not accept the settlements.

Then, two days later, I came to Ismailiya. I presented him our peace plan, including the settlements, because that is a vital issue for us, for our security and future, and he said: we have a difference of opinion. He also repeated that he could not accept it. And we agreed, in a personal talk within two minutes, that, with this difference of opinion, we shall continue our negotiations within the framework of the two committees.

So, it wasn't a matter of an ultimatum. We had a problem. We had a difference of opinion. Now we have two committees, and our friends in the two committees will discuss it, until, as we hope, they will reach an agreement.

**MacNeil:** Well, if that was the atmosphere, how do you explain to yourself the sudden withdrawal of the Egyptian delegation from Jerusalem a week ago?

**Begin:** I can't explain it, because I was taken completely by surprise. So was the Secretary of State, and so was the Egyptian delegation; they just got an order to go back to Cairo. I can only surmise. I suppose that the Foreign Office people in Egypt, after President Sadat gave his consent to have the political committee meet in Jerusalem, told him that it was not a good idea that the Egyptian delegation should stay in Jerusalem for several days, or perhaps several weeks, because there is the so-called "rejectionist front" — those who took part in the conference in Tripoli — and the delegation's continued presence there might be construed as recognition of Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel. And then he decided that perhaps it was better to withdraw the Egyptian delegation.

**MacNeil:** You had an exchange, on the day the talks broke off, with some Egyptian newspaper editors, and you said, afterwards, that you had begun to understand something, and you implied that it was that, in Mr. Sadat's mind, he had made a major concession by agreeing to recognize Israel's right to exist. Is that the big hang-up in the situation?

**Begin:** No, not that. What I learned from the Egyptian Journalists was that they see a

far-reaching change in the fact that President Sadat recognized "your right to survive" or "your right to exist." It was then that it dawned upon me that this was the assumption made by President Sadat. I explained to the Egyptian journalists: for three decades you have probably been so accustomed to hostility to Israel that you perceived the re-examination of Israel's right to survive as a most far-reaching change. But that is not the case. I told them: we have never asked you to give us such recognition. We have a right to survive as any other nation. I have never heard of anybody speaking about recognizing the right of Belgium, or Luxembourg, or of Lichtenstein to exist.

We recognize that the visit by President Sadat to Jerusalem was an act of civil courage. But, for that recognition of our right to live, to ask to jeopardize our security, to mutilate our country, to put the lives of our civilian population in direct danger, as the case would be should we accept the demands of President Sadat? That is a completely different story.

**MacNeil:** Wouldn't that state of mind explain why the peace proposal with which you responded, because it was the beginning of a bargaining position, seemed to them like an inadequate gesture in response to what they considered this very considerable gesture?

**Begin:** So they say. Even more so: Sadat said in that second October interview: "I gave Begin everything. He gave me nothing." So whenever we say, "but we have problems" — they say, "what do you mean, problems? We recognized your right to survive."

This recognition doesn't mean anything to us. It is the natural thing to do among all nations. All nations have a right to exist. What we ask you, and what we are going to negotiate with you, are the conditions for peace treaties, in which there will be mutual recognition of independence, sovereignty and peace.

**MacNeil:** Are you not concerned that world opinion might see Mr. Sadat's gesture in very simple terms, whereas your position is much more complicated, relying on the precise wording of Resolution 242 of the United Nations, and Mr. Sadat's gesture might therefore carry the day — just in public relations terms?

**Begin:** It doesn't carry the day, although some of his advisers would like to carry the night. I think we have already succeeded in convincing the leaders of your great nation that, to us, all these problems are not problems of formulas and words; they are problems concerning our very life.

Look at this map, please. When President Sadat asks us to go back to this green land, to the west, to the sea, and to include the mountains in a Palestinian state, then he is asking us to place ourselves in mortal danger, because then all our cities and towns would be within the range of their conventional artillery. If there should be a so-called Palestinian state, in no time it will be taken over by the PLO, which is bent on the destruction of Israel. They will get all the Soviet artillery, tanks and guns, etc., and every woman and child will be in direct physical danger. It's not a matter of formulation. It's a matter of our lives.

#### **117. Reply in the Knesset by Deputy Defence Minister Zippori on settlements, 3 February 1978.**

*During the last week of January, Assistant Secretary Atherton continued his efforts to bridge the gaps between the Israeli and Egyptian position on the declaration of principles, but made little progress. Meanwhile President Sadat was preparing to leave for Washington for talks with President Carter. On the eve of his departure, a number of*

*American newspapers carried a letter signed by Sadat addressed to American Jews, in which he explained the position of Egypt. In Israel, a major debate was taking place on the future of the settlements, both in Sinai and in the West Bank, where a Gush Emunim group settled at an archaeological site near Shiloh. In a reply to a motion for the agenda, Deputy Defence Minister Zippori said that the government settlement policy was to bolster existing settlements as well as establishing new ones. On the Shiloh settlements, he said that Gush Emunim would help in the excavations at Shiloh. Text:*

1. So far no discussion had been held by the governments of Israel, and no proposal has been put forward on giving up or abandoning any settlements in any area whatsoever. On the contrary. Intensive activity is being carried out by the settlement institutions with a view to bolstering existing settlements and establishing new ones throughout the area of the country.

2. On the subject of Shiloh: In response to a specific request from an authoritative professional factor, and after funds were allocated by the Ministry of Education, the Defence Ministry approved the setting up of a camp for the archaeological mission to work at the site in the digging season. The factor responsible for the dig decided to make use of the services of the Gush Emunim settlement group that wishes to set up its home at this site. We see nothing wrong with this wish on the specific condition — and this has been stressed to all those concerned — that implementation of the archaeological dig is no substitute for the need for a cabinet decision over the establishment of any new settlement, so long as no such decision has been taken, no settlement will be established.

#### **118. Israel's peace plan, article by Prime Minister Begin, 5 February 1978.**

*This is the reply of Prime Minister Begin to the Sadat letter to American Jews. Mr. Begin traced the developments in the Middle East since early November, and explained the reasons for the present statement in the talks. A few days before the article appeared in the Miami Herald and other American newspapers, the Military Committee met in Cairo for two days (31 January and 1 February), but rose with no agreement in sight. Text of the Premier's article follows:*

Did President Sadat, before embarking on his journey to Jerusalem last November, know that his two ultimative demands were, and must inevitably be, totally unacceptable to Israel? He did.

On 9 November 1977, the Egyptian President made a statement to his People's Council in Cairo in which he put forth his demands that Israel restore the demarcation lines of 4 June 1967, and acquiesce in the establishment of a "Palestinian" state in Judea, Samaria (erroneously called the West Bank) and the Gaza Strip. He then added, surprisingly, that he would be ready to come to Jerusalem to address the Knesset in order, as he explained it, to prevent one additional Egyptian soldier being killed or wounded.

On the following day, 10 November, I reacted to President Sadat's announcement in a statement that read: *"Israel categorically and absolutely rejects the conditions named by*

*President Sadat, i.e., total withdrawal to the June 1967 lines and the establishment of a so-called Palestinian state. These terms, it is known, would constitute a danger to the very existence of the State of Israel. However, President Sadat could put forward this position at the Geneva Conference, as we shall present our position at the peace conference. Let no party turn its own stand into a prior condition for participating in the peace conference."*

### **Mortal Danger**

Ten days later, the President of Egypt came to Jerusalem and was accorded a respectful and cordial reception by the Government, the Parliament and the People of Israel. He came in the full knowledge, conveyed to him through my public statement, that, while Israel accepts and proposes free negotiations without any prior conditions from either side, we do not and shall not bow to the two utterly unreasonable demands which, if acted upon, would place the Jewish state in mortal danger.

President Sadat decided to come.

It is asserted by some that his visit to Israel was an act of historic precedence. But so, too, was the momentous reception he enjoyed, including the unfettered hospitality of the Knesset, where he met freely and individually with all of its parties.

In Jerusalem, President Sadat told me that, having been given the hospitality and the rostrum of the Knesset, it is my perfect right to expect the same from the Egyptian parliament in Cairo. I still look forward to receiving a reciprocal invitation.

### **'A long step forward'**

After Jerusalem came Ismailiya, in the third week of December 1977. In preparation for that meeting with President Sadat, my colleagues and I elaborated a comprehensive, far-reaching peace plan which I initially brought to the President of the United States and to his advisers. Whatever was said in the White House cabinet room during our productive exchanges on 16 and 17 December 1977 will, of course, remain confidential. However, certain public statements were made. Having learned the details of the Israeli peace plan, including the proposed arrangements for the future of our settlements in the Rafah-El Arish district and in the Sharm el-Sheikh region — which are of the greatest importance to our national security — both the President and the Secretary of State publicly praised the proposals as "*a fair basis for negotiations*," as "*a long step forward*," as an *expression of "a great deal of flexibility*," as "*a notable contribution*," and as a "*constructive approach*." Equally, leading representatives of the legislative branch, of both Houses, and other outstanding figures of American public life lauded the Israeli peace proposals.

This, to us, was gratifying but not surprising. With regard to the Sinai, we had made the most far-reaching, the most forthcoming proposals ever presented by any Israeli government. In so doing, our government became the target of criticism in Israel, not only from the parliamentary opposition (the Labour Party), but also from some of our own best friends and adherents.

### **Sweeping compromise**

We could, of course, have demanded in our peace plan rectification of the border with Egypt. Israel has the perfect right to do so under international law and practice. Many readers will recall the agonizing days leading up to the Six-Day War of June 1967. It was for Israel, in the highest sense of the term, a war of legitimate national self-defence. We were threatened, literally and physically, with the destruction of our state and the physical

annihilation of our people. On three indefensible fronts we were surrounded by almost double the number of tanks Nazi Germany had hurled against the Soviet Union in June 1941. In Cairo, Damascus, Amman and Baghdad, the slogans were the same: "*Destroy them! Throw them into the sea!*" We defended ourselves at great sacrifice. We repelled the enemies on all fronts. We won the day.

In the wake of such a war, and in accordance with every international precedent, Israel is fully entitled, morally and legally, to demand territorial changes to be embodied in peace treaties. We voluntarily refrained from doing so in the peace proposal we have currently submitted, for one overriding reason: to encourage understanding and to promote the peace. We have suggested, instead, a sweeping compromise in Sinai which, with respect to the highly vulnerable Sharm el-Sheikh region, actually revokes a decision adopted in December 1968 by the government of the late Levi Eshkol, and reaffirmed by the two subsequent governments, of Mrs. Golda Meir and of Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, determining that, in peace, Israel will retain control of a land strip linking the coastal area between Sharm el-Sheikh and Israel's southern port, Eilat. Students of the region will know that it was the Egyptian blockade of this locality which served as the flashpoint of two major wars against Israel — in 1956 and in 1967.

### **First time in history**

The second part of Israel's peace plan which won so much understanding pertains to the residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. We suggest that, for the first time in history, the Palestinian Arabs residing in these areas enjoy complete administrative autonomy, or self-rule. This, too, has no precedent. For centuries, the Palestinian Arabs were directly ruled by the Turks, then by the British and then, for nearly two decades, by the Jordanians in the east and by the Egyptians in the south. It never occurred to either of the two latter ruling Arab regimes to offer autonomy to the Palestinian Arabs. It is Israel that suggests complete self-rule for the first time, in the context of an administrative autonomy that will enable the Palestinian Arabs to run their daily lives freely.

Given these facts, one cannot but wonder at the gross irony of these last few weeks, when a propaganda campaign has been launched, calculated to misrepresent Israel's true stand. What President Carter had described as "*a long step forward*," is labelled as "*intransigence*." What Secretary Vance had said was "*a notable contribution*" and "*a constructive approach*," is called "*not forthcoming*." Day is called night. Such propaganda can never prevail over truth.

### **Two negotiating committees**

I left for Ismailiya with the positive statements of appreciation of our peace plan still ringing in my ears — from President Carter, the Secretary of State, former President Gerald Ford, ranking Senators and Prime Minister Callaghan of Great Britain, to cite but a few. It was an unusually friendly exchange between President Sadat and myself — a meeting of men and of minds. I presented to him our peace plan in detail, in both its parts. And from his lips, too, I heard encouraging expressions. Not that the President of Egypt accepted the arrangements we proposed concerning the future of our settlements, but — and this is the all-important point — he did not say, when we raised our suggestion, that there is nothing left to be discussed. On the contrary, President Sadat gave his immediate consent to my proposal to establish two negotiating committees, one to convene in Cairo and the other in Jerusalem; the former to deliberate on military and the latter on political matters. We

agreed that the relevant committees would be headed by our respective Defence and Foreign Ministers, and that the chairmanship would be by rotation. Within the framework of these committees it was agreed that Israel would put forward its proposals on the various matters requiring solution, Egypt would make its counterproposals, and the substantive negotiations would proceed apace. This was the major operative conclusion of the Ismailiya conference, as agreed upon between President Sadat and myself.

We prepared in warm friendship.

### **Avalanche of abuse**

Then came the surprise. Out of the blue, but a few days after the conference, I read an article in a prominent Egyptian paper voicing the learned opinion that I should be thankful that I was not "beaten up" in Ismailiya. Moreover, I was told by the writer that I had behaved like Shylock, that fictional money-lender whose price of payment was a pound of human flesh.

This article was to be the first of a series of obscene, anti-Semitic diatribes to appear in the controlled Egyptian press, slandering the integrity and the dignity of the Jewish people. I, my colleagues, the nation were astounded. We had read such slurs before in the 'thirties - in the infamous *Der Stuermer*. Was this "the new spirit" we had heard so much about? Was this the prelude to the new era of negotiation in Cairo and Jerusalem for the conclusion of peace treaties between the Jewish state and the Arab states?

It was in the midst of this avalanche of abuse that the sudden order came from Cairo to the Egyptian delegation in Jerusalem attending the talks within the framework of the political committee to disrupt them and return home forthwith. Secretary of state Vance had come specially to attend those talks, and yet, they had hardly begun when they were summarily broken off. The vile atmosphere of vilification created in the Egyptian capital had set the stage for the disruption of the negotiations.

### **Lessons of the past**

As I write, the Egyptian and other Arab leaders repeat their ultimative dictates to Israel: evacuate Sinai, acquiesce to its re-militarization, dismantle the civilian settlements, leave the Gaza Strip, descend from the Golan Heights, relinquish Judea and Samaria, redivide Jerusalem, agree to a Palestinian state — do all this and you will have "peace."

When Israel says, in return, that what they offer is not peace but national suicide, that the terms they demand represent a mortal danger, they are astonished that we do not rush to accept their bargain. We are even called ungrateful.

In putting forth our just case we are guided, first and foremost, by the need and duty to secure the future of our children. And in making our determinations for the future, we carry in our minds and hearts a long experience from the past.

For 19 years we lived and struggled in the very kind of hazardous situation which our neighbours would wish to see restored. Indeed, what they suggest now is even more perilous. Before 1967 we had a long, indefensible demarcation line, but it was not bordered by a "Palestinian" state ruled by Arafat and turned into a Soviet base. Nor were we threatened, before 1967, with the most modern, sophisticated Soviet-supplied weapons, as they exist today in abundance.

Yet, even then, in the past, we did not know a single day of peace in our land, nor a single week without incursion and bloodshed. Thousands were killed and maimed by in-

filtrators who crossed lines that were impossible to defend. Five wars were waged against us. Five times we had to defend not only our independence, but our very existence.

Given this record, dare Israel overlook past experience at the price of the Mortal dangers it would then confront? Would any nation place the overwhelming concentration of its civilian population in the range of conventional artillery and even of machine-guns? This is what, in fact, we are being asked to do.

### **A fair and decent plan**

As Israel seeks, therefore, to proceed with the negotiations, it must recall the past realities in order to protect its future security and peace. One lesson of the past is that Israel had, at one time, negotiated and signed, with its neighbours, agreements that categorically committed the parties to keep the peace, to refrain most hostile acts against armed forces or civilians, to refrain from employing regular, irregular or para-military forces, to refrain from the use or the threat of force. These unequivocal obligations were embodied, written and signed, in the Armistice Agreements of 1949, between Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Their specific language made of them "peace treaties" in almost everything but name. Yet what happened in reality? Permanent bloodshed, continuous threat, repeated wars. That lesson has been well learned.

Therefore, no beautiful phrases or ugly threats will move the People of Israel into surrendering to the two unreasonable demands submitted to us. Israel has proved that we not only yearn for peace, we work for it. We have prepared a fair and decent peace plan.

Let us, therefore, freely and seriously negotiate — we and our Arab neighbours. Let us do so on the basis of complete equality — neither victors nor vanquished, but equals. Let us do this, and we shall have peace.

### **119. Reply in the Knesset by Deputy Defence Minister Zippori on arms sale to Egypt, 7 February 1978.**

*In late January President Carter announced that a decision was close on the approval of sale of sophisticated aircraft to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In early February it was clear that the Carter Administration would seek to approve the arms sales in one package, in order to prevent pro-Israel Congressmen and Senators from breaking up this package. Israel was aroused by this news, which came in the midst of the attempts to revive the stalled peace talks. In a reply to a motion for the agenda, Deputy Defence Minister Zippori explained the Israeli position on the proposed sale: Text:*

Any upsetting of the arms balance between Israel and her neighbours by selling arms, or supplying additional weapons and military hardware to the Arab confrontation states is to be deplored, whether the arms are from Soviet, European or American sources.

This is of heightened significance given its timing — today, that it is to Egypt — of all countries, and from the United States, in particular.

We are at the start of the process of negotiations for a peace settlement, a process for whose success we all — I would say Israel, Egypt and the United States — anxiously

aspire, in the hope that before long a contractual agreement will be reached for co-existence and a lasting peace.

Egypt's demand to be enabled to add a new dimension to her military power at this point in time, is most astonishing. This would mean a terrible waste of funds and resources at a time when Egypt is turning towards peace, to a reduction in the size of her armed forces and a drastic cut in her defence expenditures.

Egypt's contention that the arms are intended for her African wars causes astonishment. Egypt's military might today is sufficient for her defence along all her borders with her African neighbours.

That same Egypt for whom one of the important considerations for adopting the path of peace (as its leaders have stated) was to realize the political option. And yet here we have a new arms deal that is liable to land the entire area back in a renewed and intensified arms race.

The aim to prevent war, all wars, everywhere, is a fundamental go-line of U.S. policy. Furthermore, the U.S. is one of the only states in the cynical world around us in which 'morality' and 'justice' have but one single meaning.

Naturally, the United States too aspires and works to extend its sphere of influence, to disseminate the Western way of life and the concepts of freedom and democracy, but it does so by peaceful means, by assistance through the 'Peace Corps' and not by competing in the supply of armaments to states with which it is on friendly terms.

Naturally, we are astonished, to put it mildly, at reading the preliminary reports about the supply of American armaments to Egypt — arms liable to be put to use in war against us. Of course we cannot ignore such reports.

Israel is doing what it can to prevent such deals, or if they are approved — to bring about a reduction in both quantity and quality. For this purpose we are mobilising our friends in the United States in the media, in Congress and in the administration. I have no doubt that our political activity on this issue will have great influence on the decisions of the White House in Washington, at the same time, I suggest to the Knesset that it see these things in their right perspective.

Certainly we deplore any deal that would give Egypt advanced and sophisticated weapons. But let us not forget — it is mainly the Soviet bloc that is responsible for the arms race in the region.

Western Europe today holds second place, after the Eastern bloc, in supplying arms to Egypt. On this subject too there is room for serious thoughts.

Distinguished Knesset, this subject touches on various elements which cannot be discussed in public, I propose that the issue be referred for debate to the Foreign Affairs and Defence committee.

## **120. White House statement on the Carter-Sadat meetings, 8 February 1978.**

*The Presidents of Egypt and the United States spent three days in talks. In the course of the conversations, Mr. Carter was able to persuade Sadat not to call off the peacemaking process and it was decided that Mr. Atherton would resume his efforts to reach an agreement between Israel and Egypt on a declaration of principles. In the final communique,*



*Mr. Carter reiterated the Aswan formula regarding the Palestinian issue as well as the American position on the settlements. Text:*

President Carter and President Sadat had a final meeting this afternoon.

President Carter and President Sadat continued their talks today in the same spirit of friendship and openness which characterized their stay together at Camp David over the weekend. The hours they have spent together, both alone and with their advisers, have provided the essential opportunity both sought for a relaxed and thorough review of the Middle East situation. They have concluded that the mutual trust and understanding between them which were reinforced by these meetings, will be extremely useful in helping to maintain momentum toward their common goal of peace in the Middle East.

During the course of their meetings over the past five days, President Carter reaffirmed to President Sadat the broad principles which underlie United States participation in the search for that peace:

The United States will remain faithful to its historic commitments to the security of Israel and to the right of every state in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.

Helping the parties achieve a negotiated comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict remains of highest importance in American policy, and President Carter will spare no effort in seeking ways to move the peace process forward.

A peace settlement must go beyond the mere termination of belligerency. It must provide for the establishment of normal peaceful relations between Israel and its neighbors.

The peace settlement should be comprehensive and should be embodied in peace treaties between Israel and each of its neighbors.

The settlement must be based on all the principles of Security Council Resolution 242, including withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in 1967 and the right of every state in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries. Resolution 242 is applicable to all fronts of the conflict.

There can be no just and lasting peace without resolution of the Palestinian problem.

The President reaffirmed what he said at his meeting with President Sadat in Aswan January 4: There must be a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects; it must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future.

President Carter also reaffirmed the longstanding United States view that Israeli settlements in occupied territory are contrary to international law and an obstacle to peace, and that further settlement activity would be inconsistent with the effort to reach a peace settlement.

President Sadat affirmed that the door remains open to negotiations and that Egypt will continue to do its part to assure continuity in this negotiating process in an atmosphere conducive to tangible progress.

The two Presidents also spent some time reviewing the current situation in the Horn of Africa and agreed that continuing conflict and instability there are of concern to them both. President Carter and President Sadat have agreed to consult with other countries on this matter.

Finally, the two Presidents committed themselves to remain in close personal touch through direct correspondence and diplomatic channels. In this way they are determined to ensure continuing full understanding between them both in the peace process and in bilateral relations between Egypt and the United States.

## 121. Israel government statement on settlements, 12 February 1978.

*In addition to the wording of the Carter-Sadat final communique on the settlement issue, Secretary Vance declared in a press conference on 10 February that the Sinai settlements "should not exist." This led the government of Israel to issue a sharp statement which recalled the conversations held between the Prime Minister and the President at the end of December and the absence of any American reaction to the continued presence of the Sinai settlements in the context of an Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement. Text:*

The government of Israel expresses its regret and protest over the statement made by Secretary of State Vance at the press conference of February 10, 1978.

The Secretary of State declared. Inter-alia:

"With respect to the Sinai settlements, we have said that we believe that all of these settlements are contrary to international law and that, therefore, they should not exist."

The Cabinet registers the fact that the latter part of this statement by the Secretary of State is in complete contradiction to the remarks made by the President of the United States to the Prime Minister on December 16 and 17. Following the Prime Minister's presentation to the President of the Israeli peace plan, in presenting this plan to the President, the Prime Minister included a specific reference to the continuous existence of the settlements within a United Nations zone, and an Israeli defense contingent for their protection. During the course of the exchange in the White House, not only was no reservation whatsoever made with regard to this reference, but the plan as a whole was received with a positive reaction.

The government of Israel stands by its view that the Israeli settlement program is in full harmony with international law and that it always has been legal, legitimate and essential. The United States holds a different viewpoint. However, no communication was transmitted to us, even during the seven weeks after having forwarded on December 27, 1977 the full text of the peace plan in writing to the government of the United States that the settlements "Should not exist."

Immediately after having made this part of his statement the Secretary added that, "This, however, is a problem that has to be resolved by the parties. They are going to have to negotiate it themselves."

We face here an obvious contradiction-in-terms between taking sides by a "Mediator" and his advice to conduct negotiations.

With regard to the areas of Eretz Israel, Judea and Samaria, the Secretary of State announced that "There should be a homeland for the Palestinians and that it should be linked to Jordan."

Whatever the theoretical assumptions and interpretations, there is absolutely no doubt that this plan would lead, in reality and unavoidably, to the establishment of a Palestinian state ruled by the terrorist organizations as the front-line spearhead of a potential military alignment of Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Already today, this alignment has at its disposal nearly 6,000 tanks, over 1,100 fighter aircraft, and more than 4,200 heavy guns. Israel, under such conditions, would find itself nine miles from the sea and a situation would thus be created of mortal danger to its very existence. No political goal, whatever it

be, can move Israel to place almost all its civilian population within the range of an enemy's fire and endanger the very existence of the Jewish state.

We wish to point out that it was only after the Israeli peace plan, in both its parts obtained the moral support of the United States that the government decided to send its delegation composed of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Defense Minister to Ismailia in order to bring the plan to the knowledge of the government of Egypt.

The Cabinet expresses its hope that the government of the United States will reconsider its position in light of the positive talks held between the President and the Prime Minister in December 1977, in connection with the Israeli peace plan.

## **122. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on N.B.C. television, 12 February 1978.**

*Mr. Dayan set out for the United States in the wake of the Sadat visit, in an effort to counter the many Sadat appearances there and to explain the position of Israel. Appearing on "Meet the Press", the Foreign Minister answered questions on the settlements, military arrangements in Sinai, the Sadat demands for Israeli commitments prior to negotiating and the Palestinian issue. Text:*

**Monroe:** Our guest today is Moshe Dayan Foreign Minister of Israel. He is an Israeli General and former Defense Minister. He emerged from the Six Day War of 1967 an Israeli hero. After the 1973 War he was blamed by some for lack of preparedness but an official investigation cleared him of blame. Last May General Dayan caused some controversy in Israel when he deserted the long dominant Labor Party to join the newly elected Government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin as Foreign Minister.

Mr. Minister, the Israeli Cabinet today issued a sharp attack on Secretary of State Vance for having said a day or so ago that Israeli settlements in Arab occupied territory were illegal and should not exist. The Cabinet said that Mr. Vance's statement was contradictory to previous US policy or to statements from President Carter.

Why is Mr. Vance's statement contradictory considering the fact that President Carter three times during January criticized the policy of intensifying Israeli settlements?

**Dayan:** Because our Peace Plan was presented to President Carter about Sinai and that plan included the settlements staying where they are and we believe that the President found the plan satisfactory — and I can't quote his wording exactly — but we went to the Egyptians with this plan only after the President really in a way accepted it and found it satisfactory.

**Monroe:** Could the Cabinet be going a little too far in interpreting President Carter's reception, of the Israeli plan in general, as satisfactory, as a negotiating basis, to say that it amounted to specific approval of continued Israeli settlements in occupied territory?

**Dayan:** Well, what the Cabinet criticized now was this specific point that while we are negotiating with the Egyptians about a Peace Plan and the President knows that our Peace Plan is based on the settlements to stay where they are then that Secretary Vance should not have come out now at this moment saying that a settlement should not exist there, or that the President should have said that to the Israeli Prime Minister Begin at this time before we presented our plan to the Egyptians.

**Monroe:** Do you feel Secretary Vance is taking sides with Egypt against the Israelis, or do you feel the whole US Government is taking sides?

**Dayan:** Well, I don't know for us and for me, Secretary Vance is representing the Administration and on this specific point about a settlement of the Sinai and about the West Bank, I am afraid that he is taking sides now, which won't make his job as a mediator any easier for us.

**Monroe:** When you say he is taking sides, you also mean the Government is taking sides?

**Dayan:** If he represents the Government, then the Government takes sides. I suppose he did not speak for himself but that I can't judge. If he speaks for the American Administration, then the American Administration is taking sides. If he spoke just for himself then he, himself took sides.

**Gwertzman:** Mr. Dayan, continuing on the question about taking sides, the United States, for years has been linked with Israel as Israel's ally in some people's minds. Why would the Carter Administration take side against Egypt?

**Dayan:** I think that just now we are facing the problem how to get peace and here was President Sadat and he met with the Administration and presented his case and maybe that the Administration thinks that they should give more support to President Sadat or otherwise he won't be able to continue with the negotiations for peace.

**Gwertzman:** But the question I think American officials are asking is in particular with the Sinai, if Israel is willing to give Egypt sovereignty over the entire Sinai, how can Egypt — how can Israel — excuse me — how can Israel ask to keep defended settlements as well as three airfields in that region?

It seems to be making a mockery of returning the whole territory.

**Dayan:** We did not just say that we want to give back the entire Sinai, period. We presented a plan which we think — and I still think so — is the best that could satisfy both the Egyptians and Israel as far as security is concerned.

Now, this plan consisted of some parts where the forces of Egypt would be about demilitarization in the central part of Sinai and about a belt of security along the Israeli boundary to include Sharm El-Sheikh.

And the area between El Arish and Israel, that is part of the plan and the plan is a package deal. It can be taken, accepted it can be argued about, but you cannot say "Well, if you agreed that the Sinai should be under the Egyptian sovereignty then that is that, and let Egyptian soldiers take over Sharm El-Sheikh and they will take care of the Israelis."

This was not our plan.

**Gwertzman:** Is it negotiable — for instance the withdrawal of forces is that negotiable? Is it negotiable that Israel will leave the airfields?

**Dayan:** Everything is negotiable and when we were in Ismailiya, President Sadat said that he would present us with a counter proposal, which we of course, were ready to negotiate, and this is the way to deal with that.

We presented a plan. What I am trying to say is that the plan that we presented was a complete one, including the settlements, the UN control and Sharm El-Sheikh and demilitarization.

If the Egyptians don't like it, they can present another plan and we shall negotiate over it.

**Evans:** Mr. Minister, you used a word a moment ago to describe President Carter's

reaction to Mr. Begin's plan that I believe is inaccurate. You said he called it "Satisfactory". I think Sir, he said it was a "Constructive" approach as a first step. He never really approved your plan for the Sinai. Did he, sir?

**Dayan:** Well I did say that I am not free to quote the President's exact wording or otherwise I would have repeated exactly his wording.

Maybe you are free.

I said we went to the Egyptians with the feeling that we have the President's blessing for this plan.

**Evans:** You referred last Wednesday Mr. Minister to Sadat's so called peace initiative. Why did you say "So called"?

**Dayan:** I don't remember what I said last Wednesday, but I can tell you what I think now about Sadat's Peace Plan. If President Sadat really insists on Israel withdrawing from all of the Arab territories and that Israel would accept the right for the Palestinians for self determination, which would be eventually a Palestinian state, and if he calls for Israel to withdraw all the settlements and the Israeli forces and to give back East Jerusalem, then I don't think this is a Peace Plan. I don't think it will ever be accepted by Israel. I don't think this can serve as a basis for a Peace Plan.

**Evans:** Mr. Minister, let me try this a different way. Thanks to the generosity of the American taxpayer, every man, woman and child in Israel receives the equivalent of about 700 dollars every year, and we have unemployment in this country and of course we have problems in great cities like New York, they are all screaming for Federal money.

Given the US generosity to Israel don't you think that Mr. Begin could go along with out President on the issue of these settlements particularly in the Sinai?

**Dayan:** I think our problem, particularly in the Sinai, is of security and I don't think that we ever asked you to fight for us, that you ever fought for us, or that we should rely on you taking care of us. So when it comes to our life and security we have to decide how we are going to defend our country and if you interpret it into dollars, that won't be the answer.

The question is, are American soldiers going to defend Israel and to protect it and if not, won't we be the ones to decide where are the lines that we must hold in order to defend Israel?

**Newman:** Mr. Minister, about a week ago when President Sadat was in Washington, President Carter described him as the world's foremost peacemaker.

Do you accept that characterization of President Sadat?

**Dayan:** Personally I think that he is — I believe that he really wants peace and in comparison with all of the other Arab leaders he is really a distinguished person. Personality in this respect. When it comes to the terms for peace that he calls for, especially asking that King Hussein will come in because otherwise he can't — "He" President Sadat — can't make a separate peace and King Hussein says that he can't come unless we commit ourselves for full withdrawal and all the rest, then I am not quite sure that President Sadat's plan for peace is the best one. So I am distinguishing between the characters of President Sadat — which could be a distinguished presence for peace, and the Peace Plan of President Sadat.

**Newman:** Would Israel be in a better position if President Sadat had not gone to Jerusalem in November?

**Dayan:** No, I think it was very important for all of us and it was an important step towards promoting peace, his coming to Jerusalem by all means.

**Newman:** Do you feel you are being outmaneuvered in the sense that an impression is going around that Israel is unyielding will not make necessary concessions?

**Dayan:** I think that we are doing everything that we can and should do and I would be very sorry if this is not understood by the others but I think that is what we are really doing.

**Monroe:** Mr. Minister, the New York Times in an editorial said a day or so ago, if only to diminish the damage they are doing to themselves in their current propaganda contest, the Israelis would be wise to halt all settlement activities as a contribution to peacemaking.

In the light of that editorial and in the light of expressions you have heard in this country since you have been here for several days, do you have a feeling there is widespread criticism in this country of the Israeli policy of settlements in occupied territory, especially adding to them during peace negotiations?

**Dayan:** Yes, I think that there is a widespread criticism here about the settlements but I really don't think that this is the obstacle for the progress of peace. And when it came to President Sadat when he had to explain why he called back his people from Jerusalem, from the political committee, he said it was because Israel did not agree to commit itself to withdraw from the Golan Heights and he said look here for me, President Sadat, the Golan Heights come first before Sinai, and so on, so I don't really think if we had seized all, establishing all new settlements, that that would have made things as far as the peace process is going. I don't think this is the obstacle.

**Monroe:** President Sadat of Egypt was here until perhaps 4 or 5 days ago and you have been here since then, you have had time to study the impact of his visit. Do you have a feeling that his visit here changed anything?

**Dayan:** I really don't know. I really don't know. I can't answer what I don't know. I am not that much involved in the American life. I can tell you.

**Monroe:** Do you have a sense of considerable American admiration for President Sadat and do you feel that is a factor you need to content with?

**Dayan:** I am told so. I don't have this feeling. I don't have the instrument to measure the feeling but I am told he is very popular and that Israel is coming down as far as popularity is concerned. I was told so by some people here.

**Monroe:** Does today's Cabinet statement reflect the feeling that Israel must do something to counterattack in the field of public opinion in this country?

**Dayan:** The Israeli Cabinet? Not at all. It has to do with Secretary Vance's statement which we took very seriously especially about the West Bank and the Palestinian question.

I think really that this is the problem and this is the obstacle. It is not the Israeli settlement in Sinai. It is not even the other problems between us and Egypt in Sinai. I think the real issue is the West Bank and the Palestinian problem and the future of that areas and the call on Israel to withdraw there and eventually to remove the Israeli settlement and Israeli forces from there, things that Israel I believe will never accept, just will never accept.

**Gwertzman:** Mr. Dayan, the United States is putting forth a plan for the West Bank which eventually calls for some kind of linkage between what is called a Palestinian homeland and Jordan.

Does this fall under your category of unacceptable to Israel?

**Dayan:** If it will bring to a Palestinian State, then it does. If it is not, if it is just kind of a linkage between the Palestinian Arabs who live on the West Bank and who are Jordanian citizens and those for the Parliament in Amman, then it does not fall within this category.

**Gwertzman:** But can you conceive of Israel ever withdrawing its military presence from the West Bank?

**Dayan:** No, not entirely. I can see reducing some of the forces at a time of peace but not really — I don't think that we can withdraw or should withdraw all our forces, military forces from the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip.

**Gwertzman:** Does not it seem strange for Israel with only a few thousand settlers on the West Bank to in a sense dominate the lives of almost a million Arabs?

**Dayan:** Yes, this is wrong and that is what we want to change. We don't want to dominate their lives. What we want on the West Bank is to keep some of our forces, not in order to interfere with the lives of the Arabs there but to take care and to defend Israel on the West coast, the early warnings system against air attacks or tanks in camps in military installations just in case that the West Bank would be invaded by enemy forces from Iraq. But the forces there on the West Bank should not interfere with the lives of the Palestinian Arabs, they should stay outside and should have nothing to do whatsoever with the lives of the Palestinian Arabs there.

**Evans:** Did you or any responsible officials in your Government tell President Carter, or any responsible American that there would be no new settlements for a twelve month period?

**Dayan:** I did.

**Evans:** Why then have there been four new settlements announced in the last two weeks?

**Dayan:** No, I think that we are living up to my promise exactly, we are not doing anything against my promise. What I did promise President Carter, I think it was in September last year, was that the new settlements that we would establish, something about one year, twelve months, would be, would take place within military camps and that is what we are doing. We did not say we shall not have any new settlements. We did say we will go on with more settlements, but they would take place within the military installations, within military camps.

**Evans:** What is the difference between a new settlement populated by your military, or a new settlement populated by non military?

**Dayan:** I think that everybody agrees that in the occupied territory the occupying force has got the right to have military installations military camps, whenever and wherever he feels it is necessary, so no one is asking, questioning the right of Israel to establish military camps, military installations.

So as long as we do that and if the civilian settlements are inside the military camps, we think, and to a certain degree — not entirely, I think — that is what is the feeling of the President, it is a second best rather better than having a civilian settlement outside just on top of the hill somewhere.

**Evans:** What is so angering, I think is a fair word, Sir, to the Carter Administration, is about that, that ten years, almost eleven years after you acquired this territory, you still find it necessary on the ground of military requirements to set up new settlements, military posts. But, in fact there is no problem on the West Bank that I am aware of. Are there any battles there, or any rebellions? Do you need those settlements for military reasons?

**Dayan:** I did not say we need the settlements for military reasons. I think — this is my view, that we are not foreigners in the West Bank and that the right that every Beduin has got there to buy a piece of land and to build his house is also our right there.

We do not think that the West Bank is a foreign, strange country for us, so we think

that even if not for security reasons, but just in order to satisfy our feelings, we should have the right to settle down in the West Bank.

**Newman:** When Golda Meir was the Israeli Prime Minister she used to say there is no such thing as a Palestinian people. Is there such a thing as a Palestinian people?

**Dayan:** I think — yes, I think there are Palestinian Arabs and I am sure that they feel about their cities and villages that this is their homeland. I am sure that the Palestinian Arabs born and living in Nablus feel this is their country and this is their homeland, we shall respect it.

**Newman:** How do you respect it as their country? How would you go about making it their country?

**Dayan:** Well this is a question that you cannot, for each village or even for half a million people, establish a new state. Supposing the people in the Gaza Strip were about 200,000 of original settlers there and about 190,000 refugees. They feel at home there, that that is their country, that is their homes and so on and so forth. That still does not mean that you can make a Gaza Strip state. You can't make new states everywhere. So I think that we have to distinguish between the feeling of the individuals about the place and how many states you would have in the area, and where these states would be.

**Newman:** I notice you use the word "Country", they think it is their country and you appear to accept the word country, what do you mean by country?

**Dayan:** I think they feel at home there everywhere, not just in their village. They were born there, they feel they are at home just as I feel they are at home.

**Newman:** And if they want to have a state, they are not entitled to have it?

**Dayan:** They want to have state, and the question is how many states should be there and what would be the outcome of that state. Supposing they do want — and I think they really want — to have separate state, we have to think, what would be the result of such a state, of an independent Palestinian state? Will that be good for everybody, for them, for us, for the peace for the area, or that we should find ways to satisfy their feeling without establishing a new additional state.

### **123. Announcement on the sale of aircraft to the Middle East, 14 February 1978.**

*After some hesitation, the U.S. government finally decided to propose to Congress that it approve the sale of advanced aircraft to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. This was done, according to the following statement issued by Secretary of State Vance, to promote the U.S. national security and the security of "our close friends." The statement elaborated on the need of the three recipient countries for such weapons. He also listed the quantities involved. Text:*

Consistent with our policy that arms transfers will be used to promote our national security and that of our close friends, I have recommended to the President and he has approved sales of certain aircraft to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, subject to the usual congressional review. Next week we will begin the official process of informing and consulting with the Congress. The formal notifications will not be submitted until after the Easter recess in order to give Congress an opportunity to review fully the proposed sales. These



sales will be undertaken over a period of several years. Deciding to make the sales was a very complex decision, and I want to share our views on this matter with the American people.

Any new aircraft sales to this region must be seen in the context of both the negotiating process and our objective of a peace settlement. We have considered carefully this aspect of the matter and concluded that our interests in Middle East peace and security will be best served if we go forward with some part of the aircraft sales requested by those countries.

Our commitment to Israel's security has been and remains firm. Israel must have full confidence in its stability to assure its own defense. In particular, this means Israel must be able to plan for the continued modernization of its air force. The President's decision gives particular emphasis to these points.

Egypt, too, must have reasonable assurance of its ability to defend itself if it is to continue the peace negotiations with confidence. When President Sadat made his decision several years ago to follow a course in foreign affairs that involved a change in his country's relations with the Soviet Union he lost his major source of military equipment. This was particularly the case in Egyptian defensive aircraft capability. We believe we have a basic interest in responding to Egypt's legitimate needs.

Saudi Arabia is of immense importance in promoting a course of moderation in the Middle East — with respect to peacemaking and other regional initiatives — and more broadly in world affairs, as in petroleum and financial policy the Saudi government has a legitimate requirement to modernize its very limited air defense. For several years, we and they have recognized the need to modernise their air force with an advanced interceptor. They have asked for a limited number of F-15's, the first of which would not be delivered for several years. We believe their request is reasonable and in our interest to fulfill.

We have concluded, therefore, that the sales of these aircraft to the countries in question will help to meet their legitimate security requirements, will not alter the basic military balance in the region, and will be consistent with the overriding objective of a just and lasting peace.

Accordingly, the administration plans to notify Congress of our intent to make the following sales:

For Israel, 15 F-15's in addition to the 25 previously sold, and 75 F-16's.

For Egypt, 50 F-5's.

For Saudi Arabia, 60 F-15's.

We will be signing contracts for these aircraft over the next several years. These sales will be consistent with the President's global arms transfer policy and will be within the dollar volume ceiling that he has established. The details will be reported to Congress when the statutory notification are provided.

All of these sales are directly supportive of our overall objectives in the Middle East. Members of the administration will be testifying before a number of congressional committees in support of this package so that Congress will have full opportunity to make its judgement during the period of its review.

**124. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin, 15 February 1978.**

*Following the Sadat visit to the United States, and the decision of the Carter administration to sell advanced aircraft on a package deal to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, it was deemed important that Mr. Begin meet soon with President Carter. In his statement to the Knesset, the Prime Minister announced that he would hold talks with the President in Washington in early March. He also denounced the proposed aircraft sale and explained the dangers involved in this act. Excerpts:*

(The Prime Minister commenced by recalling that there had been grave situations and tension in Israel-U.S. relations in the past, and went on to say:)

We overcame, and now too, we shall overcome — and I say this with all the feeling of hurt that I do not deny. In face of those utterances to which we have already reacted — since the friendship between us and the U.S. is a phenomenon of relations of great depth...

On behalf of the government, I wish to make a statement regarding the U.S. government's partial response to our request for the supply of modern planes. The response is partial — we requested a larger number of these planes, but this partial response contains a positive element, insofar as enhancing Israel's defensive and deterrent strength is concerned. It therefore behoves us sincerely to express our appreciation to the U.S. President for the decision he took last night on the clear assumption that in the wake of clarifications between us there will be a decision on further supplies, both of modern planes and of defensive ground weapons — the question of the supply of which will be taken up by the Minister of Defence on his forthcoming visit to the U.S. commencing 5 March.

However, it is my duty on behalf of the government of Israel and — I am sure — on behalf of the decisive majority of members of the house to appeal to the U.S. President to reconsider his decision with regard to the supply of offensive weapons to Egypt and most modern planes to Saudi Arabia. (The Prime Minister drew attention at this point to threats published in the Egyptian press — in the midst of the process of negotiations — to go to war "Unless certain ultimative demands were met.") And if such a threat was sounded from the Egyptian side it must be realized that the supply of offensive weapons to Egypt at this very time cannot but feed the threat. It can serve only as an obstacle to the negotiations because it is to us that ultimative demands were presented which we do not — and will not — accept. We proposed negotiations...

Therefore offensive weapons must not be supplied to Egypt in the midst of negotiations because such supply will be an obstacle to the conducting of negotiations between ourselves and Egypt. We therefore request that these planes — which are in the nature of offensive, and modern weapons — not be supplied to Egypt.

Secondly, we request a reconsideration of the supply of the most advanced planes on earth to Saudi Arabia. If these are supplied to that Arab state it will become — by virtue of the very supplying of them — an additional confrontation state. It is a fact that geographically Saudi Arabia is not far from Israel — and at one point is very close. Planes which can reach Eilat in just ten minutes and in another few minutes (can reach) Israel's population centres — will make Saudi Arabia an absolute and immediate confrontation state.

And we have experience: Whatever the assurances, these arms will reach the (Arab) states if they go to war against Israel on the front itself. We also have a basis for saying

that in fact this promise has already been made by Saudi Arabia to a certain Arab state: Namely, these planes — which are to be supplied by the United States — will, when the day comes, be employed against Israel and be at the disposal of that Arab state.

Israel cannot, therefore, under any circumstances agree to link the supply of the planes promised it with the supply of offensive planes to Egypt, or of very advanced planes to Saudi Arabia. With all due respect, then, I call upon the President of the United States to reconsider this decision, which he took yesterday — for it constitutes a grave danger, both to the process of negotiation for the establishment of peace, and to Israel's security.

The statement of the Israel government on Sunday was the whole truth: We did not claim that the President of the United States directly approved that detail which was presented to him within our peace plan, and which refers to the leaving of the Jewish-Israeli settlements in the Rafah Salient with Israeli protection. We said — and this is the truth — that we presented the entire plan, and this detail was part of that presentation, explicitly — including the following three elements: The settlements remaining intact, a United Nations region. Israeli protection for them. And after the plan was presented to the U.S. President, the reaction was positive for the plan as a whole. That is what we said, and I reiterate it from the Knesset rostrum...

And only after I was able to report to the Cabinet on American moral support — we did not obligate the President and we do not even consider so doing — did the Cabinet decide that the Foreign Minister, the Defence Minister and myself would go to Ismailiya and present the plan — as it was approved by the Cabinet — to the President of Egypt...

Before the President of Egypt, too, I presented the peace plan including the detail — or the general rule — of the leaving of the settlements in the Rafah Salient and along the Gulf of Eilat with Israeli protection. What was President Sadat's reaction? I shall conceal nothing. He did not accept this proposal. In fact he said that he rejects it. That is his right. But the main thing is that when he and I summed up the Ismailiya meeting we both asserted — in public too, at the joint press conference — that henceforth serious negotiations are to get underway. We made a proposal. The Egyptians will put forth their own proposal, and the give-and-take will be on the two proposals: Free negotiations, without ultimative demands, without setting dates for their termination as is proper between two peoples — two nations of ancient civilization — who want to attain peace... and in order to conduct such free negotiations President Sadat accepted my suggestion — at our first talk — to set up the two committees...

The logical question to be asked is: Just because the other side did not accept a certain proposal did those who praised the plan as a whole have to say, 'We, too oppose this proposal'? According to the history of peace negotiations and governmental declarations it cannot be said that this is the logical conclusion. On the contrary: The negotiations must go on. If someone says, ultimately, 'You must remove all the settlements from here' — what kind of negotiation is this? For both of us — the President of Egypt and myself — agreed that there would be negotiations: A counter-proposal may be put forth but not an ultimatum. With an ultimatum there is no longer a dialogue.

And the same applies to overseas: If the plan as a whole was agreed to then just because one side does not accept a certain proposal that agreement cannot be cancelled, on the contrary: Both sides must be pushed to continuing to negotiate.

Hence, the government's reaction, it was open, clear and also correct...

I shall provide another illustration. I read the Egyptian President's remark that he told me in Jerusalem, and I quote what he said while in Washington: "The main Egyptian

military force will not cross the line of the Giddi and Mitleh passes." I am one of the most veteran members of the Knesset. I have been serving in it for 29 years — and there are many members who know not just what was stated from this rostrum or in committee. But also on a personal basis, I call them to witness — and not just my Cabinet colleagues — who heard the story of the talk between myself and President Sadat in Jerusalem just minutes after it concluded. I call them all to witness, and I state that President Sadat did not utter those words, in no manner, not even by hint, did he say: "The main Egyptian military force will not cross the passes."

He told me only this: "My army will not cross the passes." That was the explicit promise without any addition, without any qualifications. Minutes after the conclusion of our talk, I related it to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Defence Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Agriculture Minister — that very evening after I left the room where President Sadat and I had spoken.

This is a central point in our plan. When we constructed our plan we said explicitly that on this promise by the President of Egypt we are building our plan. Verbally, when we presented the plan to him in Ismailiya, and in writing when just one day later we sent him the written plan. In the presence of President Sadat himself I reminded him of what he had said to me in Jerusalem. He had no reservations to make, not even one word. He could, ostensibly, have said: 'This was not what I said to you. I told you that the main Egyptian military force would not cross the passes.' But he said not even one word when I explained that this was one of the key elements of our peace plan. That is to say: here is the Suez canal, here are the passes. Between the canal and the passes there are limited forces in line with the bilateral Egyptian-Israeli agreement. Beyond the passes: Total demilitarization. This is what all of us heard...

(Interjection by Knesset member Yitzhak Rabin, Alignment: Total demilitarization up to what point?) up to the international border, to which point, we stated, we would withdraw our military forces after a transition period of a number of years — with this total demilitarization, as I have explained it...

On the question of the settlements, there is but one proposal: The government of the United States and the government of Israel agree to disagree. The United States government says our settlements contradict international law. The Israel government says: We have examined international law, we have perused it — including Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention — and we assert that the settlements are fully in accord with international law. The United States government says: The settlements are illegal, the Israel government says: The settlements are absolutely legal... that is the fact: There are between the government of the United States and the government of Israel differences of opinion on this question, and we must agree that, on this issue, we disagree.

As the government communicate stated, we reacted to a certain expression uttered in Washington a week ago. I do not conceal that this expression was very painful for us. Lately, we have heard interpretations of it — and it is good that there are such extenuating interpretations — but the expression itself was very serious. We reacted to it, and we hope that by this means we shall be able — out of a clear knowledge of the differences between the two governments on the specific matter of settlements — to continue, with understanding and friendship.

(The Prime Minister concluded by announcing that he had this morning received an invitation from President Carter to visit the United States for three days next month, for talks. The date was to be set through regular diplomatic channels.)

**125. Interview with Defence Minister Weizman on Israel television, 17 February 1978.**

*The Defence Minister explained again the Israeli concern over the proposed sale of U.S. aircraft and said that the timing was poor, coming at the very time Israel was negotiating with Egypt, and the sale and its package nature ignored previous American promises made to Israel as part of the 1975 Sinai Interim Agreement. He said that the new development is being carefully studied in Israel and its implications regarding Israeli airbases in Sinai will have to be weighed. Excerpts:*

**Q.** Mr. Weizman — does the supply of American aircraft to Saudi Arabia and Egypt represent a threat to Israel's security?

**A.** ... I would say that this presents some problems for us. Sixty F-15s to Saudi Arabia, and fifty F-5s to Egypt — this is something we shall have to reckon with. ... Apparently the U.S. has decided to be an influential factor regarding arms in the Middle East in those countries which are pro-American, and the political aspect has perhaps much more weight than the presence of American planes itself, its military implications notwithstanding.

... The Israel government, the Israelis, must consider how the entry of the U.S. on the wings of a plane (and I hope it will not be on a tank tomorrow) can affect the components of peace-making...

... I believe that the objections to this American step are (A) that it was taken at the very time when we are negotiating with the Egyptians, and (B) that it ignores the fact that we have been promised a number of planes in the framework of the 1974–75 agreement. And here we find ourselves included in a package deal which I would leave if I could: The tie-up of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel is the real blemish.

... The very fact that the Americans saw fit — and this is my main objection. The gravest fault in this to my mind mistaken American step — to take this decision at a time when we are engaged in difficult negotiations which, in fact, have come to a kind of crossroads after Sadat's latest moves. The breaking-up of the Jerusalem conference — I believe this is a subject which will have further implications on the talks between us.

... The American move will affect some of our thinking, at least in the military committee, regarding the way we see the Sinai agreement and has given us other, second thoughts which may or may not be helpful to the negotiations. An introduction like this of modern American planes into the Middle East — I don't think the entire significance of this step is something that can be immediately evaluated... This is being studied at the General Staff and at the Defence Ministry who are weighing all the aspects of America's entry into the Middle East with arms and the entry of modern aircraft into the region. No doubt airfields are one factor, and airfields in Sinai are another.

... I believe that Sadat wants peace. I only think he wants peace on his terms, and on his terms as they appear now, this will not come about. The question is whether we are moving towards another round of talks — and I hope we are... I believe the people of Egypt want peace, I believe and know that the Israelis want peace.

**Q.** What in fact is keeping you (from resuming negotiations)?

**A.** First of all, the government's resolution... There have also been a number of developments which have changed the situation.

**Q.** Mr. Weizman, does the position taken by both sides regarding the settlements during

your last meeting with your Egyptian opposite number — does this initial stance permit progress?

A. I believe it does... The cabinet resolved to hold a debate on the entire subject of the settlements and its policy, and this debate will be held next week.

... This is what I told the Egyptian President when we met at Aswan: From his point of view, the step he took was for him apparently a giant move, which apparently required an enormous effort, and therefore he concluded that everyone now must accept everything he dictates and I am using this term advisedly, since there was no small measure of dictate on his part.

If he really wanted to negotiate, he would not insist on the points he did in the first phase of the talks — these are no negotiations. These are dictates — and he made some mistakes during the past months, including the breaking-off of the political talks in Jerusalem.

... (On the other hand), this is the first time in thirty years since the establishment of the state, that we have contacts with an Arab nation — and I suggest that we do not relinquish this contact. We must now be strong, get organized, and think well how to handle this initiative begun three months ago and advance it toward an agreement with Egypt.

## **126. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan in Ma'ariv, 17 February 1978.**

*In an effort to revive the talks on the declaration of principles, Foreign Minister Dayan met with President Carter on 17 February. They reviewed the situation and while there were no new decisions, Assistant Secretary of State Atherton was due back in Jerusalem on 21 February to continue the shuttle diplomacy he was engaged in since the breakdown of the talks in Jerusalem on 18 January. In this interview, Mr. Dayan said that one of the major obstacles in the talks with Egypt was the absence of Jordan from the process. Text:*

**Q.** What did you speak with President Carter about?

A. I cannot go into details. I can speak of the subject. The subject was the continuation of the talks between ourselves and the Egyptians. The matter of the declaration of principles and what to do in order to continue to make progress in the negotiations. The President showed great expertise. To my surprise, he knew the various formulations — where the difficulties lie, what the differences of opinion are. The talk lasted 40 minutes and was like a working discussion on the subject of how to make progress. At this stage we did not engage in concrete questions — not as regards the settlements, not as regards the airfields, not as regards withdrawal. We dealt only with the definitions connected with the declaration of principles.

**Q.** Would you describe your talk as negotiation?

A. No. It was a clarification talk — like consultations, an exchange of views.

**Q.** Is it your impression that Sadat informed the Americans of positions containing elements of new flexibility?

A. Not especially. The Americans themselves have a lot of uncertainty as to how Sadat will behave in this or that eventuality. We did not form the impression that he showed the Americans any great tendency to compromise.

**Q.** Is there a danger of a time-limit hanging over the process? Did the Americans talk in terms of weeks or months?

**A.** I do not know. They did not report to me on Sadat. I do know that Atherton will be arriving (in Israel) on Tuesday and they want to continue the talks intensively. Beyond that, I do not know.

**Q.** Is it your impression that the Americans accepted Sadat's view that it is absolutely essential that Hussein join in the talks and that an effort will be made to bring about that end?

**A.** Certainly an effort will be made. If it is a condition for continuation of the negotiations — that I do not know. At this stage the Americans want to make a maximum effort in order to bring Hussein into the talks.

**Q.** And this effort will be made through the declaration of principles.

**A.** Perhaps through other contacts also, which they or the Saudis have with Hussein. But as far as we are concerned, it will be done in connection with the declaration of principles.

**Q.** Did the question of the planes come up in your talk with Mr. Carter?

**A.** No. We noted that Defence Minister Ezer Weizman would be here and would deal with that.

**Q.** Did the "Misunderstandings" over the settlements, or of the President's original reaction to the Israeli peace plan come up in the talk?

**A.** Not at all. Interestingly, it did not come up in the press conference either. No one asked: "Just a minute, you say this and they say that." Nothing. But not in the talks either — neither in the State Department nor with the President — did anyone touch on this question: As though the whole thing had never existed.

**Q.** Did you discuss the forthcoming visit by Begin?

**A.** Both of Begin and of Ezer. The Begin visit was mentioned in general terms, but we did not go into details.

**Q.** In the course of your visit, did you feel that you were succeeding in undermining the image Sadat created for himself as the 'Poor Guy' seeking a peace Israel refuses to give him?

**A.** I did not even try to suggest that Sadat is not being sincere. On the contrary, I said I believed he wants peace. It makes no difference to me whether he wants — or needs — peace. I believe him. I did not try to claim that Sadat does not want peace. I think that the Jews accept several of our arguments — including the most important — that, ultimately, for Israel it is the security aspect which is decisive. We cannot rely on anyone else — nor is anyone proposing that we should.

When Sadat says he will give us security, that is just a joke. The Americans are not offering us (security), and it is good that Israel is not building on international or American forces to guard it. As a result, Israel can also say what those places are from which it cannot remove the army.

In this matter, they 'bought' our approach. They also bought (the argument) that in the negotiations with Sadat it is not we who are holding up the redemption or progress but the fact that Hussein is not coming in. On this matter, we do not want to make a prior commitment without negotiations of this there can be no doubt. For Sadat, the major immediate problem is whether Hussein will come in to the talks. Therefore, the declaration of principles is more important to (Sadat) than the issue of the settlements or continued clarification of the Sharm El-Sheikh question. First and foremost he is interested in whether he has Hussein or does not have Hussein.

**Q.** Is it your impression too that the settlements issue has led us into a diplomatic and information self-defence stance?

**A.** That may have been so in a certain period. Meantime time has done its own work. It has emerged that the question now is: Will Hussein come in or not? When you ask here what Sadat wants — does he stress the removal of (settlement) points or does he stress the demand that Israel carry out a comprehensive withdrawal in the West Bank and agree to self-determination for the Palestinians — (He stresses the latter issue, and this could also be inferred from) Vance's declaration of last Friday that not only should the settlements not exist but that there should be withdrawal on all fronts and that Israel's security problem should be solved within the framework of withdrawal and of 242. Therefore I think that slowly but surely this (and not the settlements) is coming to occupy the key place — along with the sale of arms. The main question now is not that of the settlements, but of arms and the declaration of principles.

As time passes, more and more light is shed on the question: What is holding up progress in the negotiations with Sadat? The conclusion is that he does not want to advance without Hussein and without a fitting definition for the Palestinian issue — and it is not the physical existence of the settlements (which is the delaying factor).

**Q.** How is the demand for self-determination reconcilable with Hussein's intention of taking over the West Bank?

**A.** Hussein is not in a position where he can say, "I want the West Bank." He in fact says that the Palestinians have to be allowed to decide for themselves. Both Hussein, the Americans and the Egyptians are building on (their belief) that they will prefer to be connected with Jordan.

**Q.** How much weight do the Americans attach to Saudi interests and positions?

**A.** They attach great weight to Saudi Arabia. They need their relations with Saudi Arabia, so they won't raise the price of oil.

**Q.** Do you have any assessment as to what will follow the Atherton mission?

**A.** I do not know, nor do I know whether or not we will achieve a declaration of intentions, it depends on Sadat's stand.

**Q.** Do you have any evaluation as to whether Sadat's U.S. visit has promoted the process?

**A.** I do not know. At the end of my own visit here, too, I do not know whether our situation with Sadat holds out better or worse prospects.

## **127. Press conference with President Carter, 19 February 1978.**

*The questions on the Middle East centered on the Carter administration's decision to sell sophisticated aircraft to the Middle East. The President defended his decision, both its timing and its rationale. He also said that "Saudi Arabia has never had any active aggression against Israel." Israeli sources countered that Saudi units fought in the Golan Heights in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and also sent units to Jordan both in 1967 and 1973. Excerpts on the Middle East follow:*

**Q.** Do you think that Congress will go along with your decision to send sophisticated fighter jets to the Middle East? Can you give us the rationale for including for the first time in these sales Egypt and Saudi Arabia along with Israel?

**President:** Yes. I think Congress will go along with the proposal to sell a limited number of airplanes in the Middle East. F-15 planes are already being delivered to Israel, and in the new proposal Israel will receive additional F-15s and F-16s, very advanced fighter planes.



We have for a long time sold military equipment to Saudi Arabia, one of our closest allies, staunchest friends and economic partners. This is the first time we have sold F-15s to Saudi Arabia, but they have other advanced equipment.

The first planes will be delivered to Saudi Arabia not this year, or next year, but 1981 or 1982. The planes we have agreed to sell to Egypt are the F-5Es, not nearly so advanced a weapon as the F-15s or F-16s. But as you know, a few years ago, Egypt, which is now one of our staunchest friends and allies, severed their close relationship with the Soviet Union and in effect became an ally of ours. And I don't believe that there is any danger of this relatively short range not-advanced fighter causing a disruption in the peace between Egypt and Israel.

So for those reasons, I am advocating to the Congress that they approve these sales and I believe the congress will do that.

**Q.** Mr. President, knowing tension already exists in the Israeli settlement policy, do you have any second thoughts about the timing of your announcements to sell war planes to Egypt or was the timing of that announcement and our public statements about the Israeli settlement policy a message to the Israelis to become more flexible in the current negotiations?

**The President:** The two were not interrelated in my decision-making process. When I was in Saudi Arabia earlier in January, I told them that shortly after the Congress reconvened, I would send up a recommendation for military sales to the Middle East.

Every time I have ever met with Prime Minister Begin, both in the public sessions, that is with staff members, and also in my private sessions with just him and me present this has been the first item that he has brought up. "Please expedite the approval of the sales of military planes to Israel."

I think that the timing is proper. We are not trying to short circuit the allotted time for the Congress. As a matter of fact, we will not begin the process until after the Congress reconvenes, the Senate reconvenes. So there will be a full 50 days for the Congress to consider the matter. Twenty days after this coming Monday, I will send up official papers. I don't think it is a bad time to send it up.

I recognized ahead of time there would be some controversy about it. We did give it second and third thoughts before I made a decision about the composition of the package and the date for submitting it.

**Q.** Mr. President, on the Middle East, arms to the Middle East, I want to ask a kind of philosophic question. How do you rationalize the idea of selling weapons, more sophisticated weapons of war, with the argument that they would help to bring about peace?

Does it bother you that these more and more sophisticated weapons are being sold to both sides and if a new war were to break out, it would be a more violent confrontation than any in the past?

**The President:** As you know, we are not introducing new weapons into the Middle East. F-15's are already being delivered into the Middle East. Also, I have pledged myself to cut down on the volume of weapons each succeeding year as long as I am in office, barring some unpredictable worldwide military outbreak. This year there will be less weapons sales than last year. This will include, of course, the Middle East.

I think it is very good for nations to turn to us for their security needs instead of having to turn to the Soviet Union, as they have in the past. I am talking specifically about Egypt. You have to remember that Saudi Arabia has never had any active aggression against

Israel. Saudi Arabia is our ally and friend. Egypt is our ally and our friend. Israel is our ally and friend.

To maintain security in that region is important. Egypt has other threats against its security. The Soviets are shipping massive quantities of weapons into the Middle Eastern area now; into the Red Sea area, Ethiopia, Syria, Iraq, Libya, and we cannot abandon our own friends. So I don't think it is wrong at all to insure stability or the right to defend themselves in a region with arms sales.

We are continuing multi-national negotiations with other sellers of weapons to get them to join with us in a constant step-by-step, year-by-year reduction in total arms sales. If they do, I think the world will be much more peaceful in the future.

## **128. Interview with Foreign Minister Dayan on Israel radio, 24 February 1978.**

*The Foreign Minister noted with regret what he termed the stiffening of the Egyptian position, especially in their demands for a prior Israeli commitment to withdraw from the territories and granting the Palestinian Arabs self-determination. He felt that part of the change in the Egyptian position was due to the refusal of Jordan to enter the talks and the fear of Egypt to remain alone in the negotiating arena. He also said that Egypt was not prepared to sign a separate peace treaty with Israel. Text:*

**Q.** Mr. Foreign Minister, pessimistic reverberations have been reaching us recently, particularly this week, as to your view of the chances of the negotiations. Is there any truth to them?

**A.** The characterization of pessimism came as a result of leaks on statements I made in a conversation with employees of the Foreign Ministry about a briefing I gave to the Knesset Defence and Foreign Affairs committee, so naturally they were not fully reported. I would like to express them as I see them. I do not know if they should be characterized as pessimism — this is not the correct characterization. But what is correct is that I indicated and I am afraid I did not err — the difficulties with which we are confronted in the negotiations between ourselves and the Egyptians and the American mediation on this issue of the agreements, and in this stage of (formulating) a declaration of principles. The difficulties are numerous and basic, so if pointing out difficulties constitutes pessimism, then call it pessimism. It would be even more correct to say that we must be aware of the situation and shouldn't make life simple and easy for ourselves.

**Q.** You speak of difficulties. Are there new difficulties which did not exist one or two months ago in Ismailiya and which have developed now?

**A.** I believe that there has been a stiffening of the Egyptian position, and I assume that this is not merely a result of our first impression but rather a subjective Egyptian stiffening. Various characterizations to which they agreed in the beginning are not acceptable to them now. It is likely that the reason for this is not that they have changed their position, but rather that the Egyptians themselves originally thought that they could bring other countries — that is to say, Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian Arabs — to the discussion table even while using characterizations of a more general and less radical nature. But when these latter did not come, and King Hussein presented his conditions — which

are much harder than the Egyptians originally thought — the Egyptians then hardened their stance. These are not additional difficulties, but they unquestionably constitute a hardening in the Egyptian position.

**Q.** Where can this be discerned?

**A.** It can be discerned in the topic of withdrawal and of an Israeli commitment to a withdrawal in all the areas of Judea and Samaria, and I am afraid also in the verbal commitment regarding the Golan Heights and certainly regarding the Sinai. They want some sort of Israeli commitment to granting the Palestinian Arabs the option of self-determination. This is the principle key to the hardening.

**Q.** I am caught up with one expression from your response, that of “Verbal characterization.” This is basically how you described the purpose of the (declaration of) principles: (An attempt) to find some verbal characterization following which it would be possible to continue the negotiations. What is the point of the verbal whitewash of a declaration of principles which would enable the negotiations to continue, when the controversy is really over much deeper things? The Egyptians want self-determination. we talk about self-rule. Instead of bothering so much with a declaration of principles, why not get down to the negotiations themselves?

**A.** That’s exactly the point. Let me take the Egyptian stance regarding the Egyptian issue. For example, there is no doubt that they have a different position than we regarding the issues between ourselves and them, but they did not set our acceptance of their position as a pre-condition between ourselves and them, of their beginning negotiations. Instead they said what they said. Sadat (expressed his position) while in Jerusalem and we said what we said, that our position is different and Prime Minister Begin presented our position. The Egyptians did not say “If you do not commit yourselves to prior acceptance of our position, then there is no point in sitting at the table. Nor is this the case regarding the continuation (of formulating) the declaration of principles which deals solely with the general Arab and Palestinian issues. What they do not find sufficient in the presentation of our position is our saying such-and-such is our position, and these are our proposals, and if others think otherwise, having alternative proposals and not wishing to accept our peace plan, then they of course have a right to offer their own proposals which we will consider even if they are different from and contradict our own. The Egyptians are saying “No” — and they are doing this as a result of Jordan’s position — “If you do not commit yourselves prior to negotiations and without negotiation to accept this radical position on withdrawal and on the rights of the Palestinians then the Jordanians will not come and there will then be no point to continuing the negotiations.” Here’s the difference. It is impossible to get to negotiating because they want Israel in advance to accept the position and the commitment to agree to this radical Jordanian position, which is now being expressed by the Egyptians.

**Q.** Have I understood you correctly that at this time, what the Egyptians are requesting is a formula which will also accommodate Jordan. A stiffer formula — which will be difficult for us to accept, and since Jordan has not yet joined, it will be necessary to initiate a new move.

**A.** I do not know what a new move is, but the objective difficulty in the situation is that apparently Egypt is not only unwilling to make a separate peace agreement — and I have heard from various people and have read in the press from Mr. Rabin, Mr. Peres, that it is possible one way or another and at one pace or another to reach peace with the Egyptians in a short time. I have not personally heard this, but have read it in the papers, so the ques-

tion is, what must we do in order to reach peace with Egypt, and does what we must do involve only the issues between ourselves and the Egyptians or does it involve something else?

To the best of my knowledge and information, the situation is that Egypt is not prepared to make a separate peace agreement with us today — perhaps it will change its mind — or even to conduct separate negotiations for a long time without Jordan's cooperation being guaranteed. And then it is Jordan which is presenting the conditions under which it would be prepared to join the negotiations.

This is a question of physical not verbal presence. In other words, Jordan's position is that if all these things which have been publicized in its name are not guaranteed then it will not come. And the Egyptians are not willing to negotiate with us for a separate peace without these partners. This is Secretary of State Vance's characterization which I read today in the paper according to which the purpose of the declaration of principles is to broaden the group of participants that the formulation be such as to allow broadening the group of participants to include Jordan and Syria as well. Imagine what conditions we would have to guarantee in advance so that Syria would agree to participate in the negotiations. That's the problem.

**Q.** You mentioned Vance, the U.S. What role is the U.S. fulfilling at present?

**A.** It is of course fulfilling the role of mediator. But it is also offering and will offer its own proposals. I would like to return to the previous issue. Take the issue of the settlements, it is not that the question doesn't exist — it exists. But I believe that when the Americans raise this issue, it is not merely because they think the settlements themselves to be illegal and an obstacle to peace, but because they believe that in order for Jordan and the rest of the involved parties to participate in the negotiations, we must commit ourselves to withdrawal, the issue of the settlements, like the presence of the I.D.F. being part of the symbolic aspects involved. It is not the settlements themselves, but rather our approach must be such that we would agree to withdrawal from these areas, and if one is prepared to withdraw then what point is there to settlements? From their standpoint the problem in Israel's position on the settlements and in its standing up for its right to settle in Judea and Samaria is that this position does not involve the recognition of an Israeli willingness to withdraw. So it is not the (issue of the) settlements themselves, but rather of remaining or withdrawing.

**Q.** What is the question of settlements in your view?

**A.** Here is the essence of the settlement question. In effect I distinguish between two places in the areas, in Sinai, in the Rafah Salient, etc. The settlements were intended as and constitute one of the State of Israel's means of security. Now I have not heard that Egypt or anyone else has said, "You know, remove the settlements and put an armoured battalion or some other military force in their place and we won't care." So whoever says, why don't you relinquish the settlements, should understand that the alternative would not be relinquishment of the settlements with some other means of security to satisfy Israel, but rather relinquishment of the settlements and of the means of security which they constitute. With regard to Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip, the question is not merely one of security, but again, in the long run of whether we consider ourselves to have a right to settle, purchase land and live in it, or whether we believe that these are not among our rights. This is the key.

For if we think this should be among our rights — including in the permanent agreement — then why should we renounce it? Those who think we must stop and renounce it,

should be answered: Do they think that this should be among our rights in a peace agreement or not. If it should be among our rights, then would it really simplify matters for us in the future within the framework of the agreement if we were to halt the settlements in every manner at the present time. This seems to me to be the principal question.

**Q.** Does the question of the settlements have any bearing on the (composition of the) party which will be meeting with President Carter in the middle of next month? Does the fact that this time the Prime Minister will be accompanied by the Foreign Minister and the Defence Minister indicate the character of the discussions. Perhaps the possibility that Israel will present a new plan or change its plan?

**A.** I do not know if it is connected. In my view, it is not connected to the composition of the party which will be going on this trip. Two things must be stated and stressed. We are obviously in the midst of the discussions, and we are now at an advanced stage. The essence of things must be seen. The more progress is made, the more the essence must be seen, for one is likely to fail to see it.

I believe that we should be guided by three principles. First, we should be completely open to reconsideration of the issues, not being tied only to past positions. We should be open and capable of seeing the situation for what it is with fresh and realistic vision. Secondly, when we make decisions, the (negotiating) team, the Government, and the Israeli people must view the future from the long run. We are discussing not only peace, we are discussing the permanent borders of Israel and not what will happen in another two or three months, but in the course of many years. We must, despite all the difficulty it involves, view the development of things in the long run, from both the military-security and the fundamental political standpoints. We must consider how our present actions will look years from now. Thirdly, and this is the difficult part in the present situation — in those things which we believe must be scrupulously held to — because of this consideration that it will determine the future. Not because we said it in the past — we must demonstrate a willingness for great consistency and obduracy, despite the difficulty involved. There is perhaps a contradiction here between the openness on the one hand, and the consistency and obstinacy on the other, but we should be open in those matters that require openness and change those things that need changing. But things that we believe are in our soul, there is no alternative — despite the difficulty — but to insist on them to the end.

## **129. Cabinet communique on settlements, 26 February 1978.**

*In view of the controversy between Israel and the United States over the settlements issue, and the growing debate inside Israel on this question, the Cabinet decided that for the time being no new decisions would be taken on either political matters or on the establishment of new settlements. Further clarification of the government's settlement policy was made by Foreign Minister Dayan, speaking to the delegates of the Zionist Congress on 28 February.*  
*Texts:*

At its weekly session, the Cabinet held a discussion on political issues and on the settlement question—and resolved that it had no need to resort to new resolutions on these matters.

Discussion on this item was held in the framework of the Ministerial Defence Committee.

**Statement by Mr. Dayan:**

"I do not know of a single settlement which has been established, not only since Sadat's visit, but since this Government was formed. When we submitted our peace proposal to Egypt, it was a package deal. We did not say we would evacuate Sinai under all conditions. Our approach was that of a general conception, which included demilitarization and the maintaining of Israeli settlements as a security strip along the border and which would be protected by an Israeli civilian police force. We said: Egyptian sovereignty and the maintaining of settlements under the U.N. flag and without an Israeli military force. Egypt could have and still can propose a different plan.

"The policy of this government is not to establish new settlements. No new settlements have been established. The Cabinet's most recent resolution repeated this policy of refraining from establishing new settlements while strengthening existing ones. If immigrants wish to settle in Yamit they may do so. If there is room in a settlement for 80 families and there are only 60, there is no reason not to add another 20, and if more water is required, we shall provide more water.

"It was decided at the time to establish three settlement within the framework of IDF camps in Judea and Samaria. One of these has been established, and the Cabinet decided not to annul its resolution regarding the other two, which will be established when the time comes."

**130. Press conference with President Carter, 2 March 1978.**

*Mr. Begin was invited to visit Washington for talks with the President from 13 March. In early February a new controversy arose between Israel and the United States over the interpretation of U.N. Resolution 242. Minister Haim Landau stated publicly that according to Israel's view, the Resolution did not dictate to Israel withdrawal from the West Bank. President Carter reacted to this interpretation and in his news conference said that all parties must cleave to Resolution 242 and that its abandonment "would put us back many months or years." Excerpts from the Middle East question follow:*

**Q.** On another subject — (laughter) — recent public opinion polls — this from Judy Woodruff of NBC — show a continuing decline in the rating people give you for your job performance as President. How concerned are you that your administration is perhaps developing a reputation for fumbling and ineptitude because of incidents like the Marston firing or 'of a failure to exert leadership because of the stalemate on the energy bill'?

**The President:** I might say that we have had to deal, and have decided to deal, with some longstanding, very difficult, controversial issues that in some instances had not been adequately addressed by my predecessors. I say that without criticism, but obviously we needed a comprehensive energy policy years ago.

We have addressed some questions on the Middle East that in the past had too long been ignored, trying to bring about a comprehensive settlement there. This is a very difficult, complicated issue over which we do not have control. We have encouraged direct negotiations with Israel and the major Arab countries. We have been successful in seeing

that occur because of the action by foreign leaders between Begin and Sadat, something that was hoped for for generations, or for at least decades. We have seen a recognition of Israel's right to exist by Egypt and progress has been made; obviously, not yet have we been successful...

**Q.** Later this month you will be meeting with Prime Minister Menachem Begin from Israel. Dick Ryan of the Detroit News asks: What do you hope to achieve during your meeting with the Prime Minister?

**The President:** This will be my third meeting with Prime Minister Begin since he has been the leader of Israel. In addition, I communicate with him fairly frequently by personal letter, by diplomatic message, and on occasion by telephone. And both our own Secretary of State and other officials and his Secretary of State and other officials come here frequently. Defense Minister Weizman will be here shortly to consult with me and the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State and others.

We are looking for some common ground on which the Egyptians, Israelis, Jordanians, residents of the West Bank and other areas can agree.

This is a difficult and sensitive question. As you know, the Gaza Strip has had an affiliation in the past with Egypt, the West Bank with Jordan, both now occupied by Israel and we hope to search out at the top level of government some resolution of the differences on specifics relating to the Sinai and also on a statement of principles relating to the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, hoping at that time that Egypt and the Jordanians and the Palestinian Arabs who live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be satisfied to conclude perhaps some agreements and proceed with further negotiations leading to an ultimate resolution of the issue, based on United Nations Resolution 242.

One of the crucial elements of any progress in the Middle East is a cleaving to the commitment that U.N. 242 is a basis for continued negotiations and a solution. The abandonment of that would put us back many months or years. So this is what I hope to accomplish with Prime Minister Begin, to frankly discuss with him my previous agreements and discussions with President Sadat; to encourage direct negotiations to be resumed; and to search out common ground based on advice given to me by Secretary of State Vance and also by Mr. Atherton on the latest possible language changes that might be necessary to let Egypt and Israel agree. So this is what I hope to accomplish and I believe the personal discussions will be good.

I would much prefer that the personal discussions be carried on between Sadat and Begin. But in the absence of that possibility at this moment we hope to restore it and act as an intermediary.

So I think that the polls show that my own personal popularity is very high. The assessment of how successful our administration has been is disappointing, but it is a partnership between us and congress, between us and the nations in the Middle East, between us and the coal miners and the coal operators, and government doesn't have the unilateral, autocratic control over some of these very difficult issues.

### **131. Reply to a question in the Knesset by Foreign Minister Dayan on Resolution 242, 6 March 1978**

*Before the Israel-U.S. controversy on the meaning and interpretation of Security Council Resolution 242 could get out of hand, Foreign Minister Dayan, in a reply to a question in*

*the Knesset about reports to the effect that the position of Israel regarding that Resolution amounts to annulling previous acceptance of the Resolution, denied these reports and said there has been no change in the Israeli position on the Resolution, although there could be a number of interpretations. Text:*

“These reports are entirely without foundation. The Government of Israel has stated in the Knesset that it accepts Security Council Resolution 242, and that statement is still valid. But of course, there are different interpretations to Resolution 242. In the view of the Government, there is no contradiction between the Israeli peace plan, including its proposals regarding Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, and the meaning of Resolution 242.”

### **132. Press conference with President Carter, 9 March 1978.**

*In this news conference, the President repeated his statement made a week before that “for any nation to reject the application of 242 to the occupied territories, including the West Bank, the Sinai, the Golan Heights, would be a very serious blow to the prospects of peace in the Middle East.” The President also said that he would convey to Prime Minister Begin the views of President Sadat and that while the differences between Egypt and Israel over the Sinai were minor, there was still a major gap on the Palestinian issue and the resolution of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip future. He stressed that he was not going to pressure Israel into a position it did not want to adopt, and that the U.S. would continue in its role of an intermediary. Excerpts from the questions on the Middle East:*

**Q.** Mr. President, on the Middle East, the State Department today reaffirmed that UN Security Council Resolution 242 remains in our view the bedrock of our efforts to bring peace to that area and more or less served notice on the Israeli government not to take any decision to renounce that. Could you state for us what your understanding or your interpretation of Security Council Resolution 242 is and what your understanding of the Israeli position on this is?

**The President:** Well, United Nations Resolution 242 was passed about ten years ago. Since then, it has been endorsed with practically no equivocation by our own country, by the entire international community, by the Israeli government, and by the Arab countries who border on Israel. It calls for the withdrawal of Israel from territories occupied in the 1967 war. It calls for the restoration of security of Israel behind recognized and defensible borders. And this has been the basis on which all of our efforts since I have been in office, and also my predecessors’ efforts have been based.

For any nation now to reject the application of 242 to the occupied territories, including the West Bank, the Sinai, the Golan Heights, would be a very serious blow to the prospects of peace in the Middle East.

In addition to the principles that I have just described to you, we have also been working with complete commitment and with some substantial success, particularly in the case



of Egypt, to ensure that Israel will not only be blessed with a cessation of hostilities, but also with a full restoration of peace, open borders, diplomatic relations, free trade, exchange of tourism and students and cultural exchanges. This is a prospect that we still have. But the abandonment of United Nations Resolution 242 as it applies to the West Bank and other occupied territories would be a very serious blow to the prospects of peace and a complete reversal of the policy of the Israeli government and other governments in the area.

**Q.** Mr. President, have you given thought to abolishing the job of liaison with the Jewish community?

**The President:** No. We have many members of our administration who work directly with Jewish Americans who are interested particularly in the Middle East and other similar matters of interest to other groups in our country.

I meet frequently with groups of Jewish Americans who come to the White House, so does the Vice President, the Secretary of State does at the State Department, Dr. Brzezinski, Hamilton Jordan, Stu Eizenstate and so does Mark Siegel.

So we have a concerted effort to present our views and to receive the views of those interested parties and I think one of the most crucial elements of a successful achievement of peace in the Middle East is to continue those consultations and we will of course do that.

**Q.** Mr. President, isn't it discriminatory? I understand there are some two million Arabs in this country. Do you give this kind of consideration to them?

**The President:** I have also met, I should have said, with Arab leaders from all over the country on the same subject...

**Q.** You have spoken many times of the commitment that the United States has for the security of Israel. In 1975, in September, the Sinai II agreement said specifically that the United States would promise to give advanced aircraft such as the F-16, in an unspecified time and number, to Israel.

Why is that promise of the United States now made part of a package deal? In other words, why is it tied to approval for aircraft to other countries, Egypt and Saudi Arabia?

**The President:** We are honoring completely the commitments made to Israel in the fall of 1975 concerning an adherence on our part to the adequate defense capabilities of Israel, including advanced aircraft like the F-15 and the F-16.

Some orders of this kind have already been placed, accepted and deliveries are in prospect. Some planes have already been delivered. And the proposal that I have made to Congress on the arms sales package is compatible with that commitment.

In the fall of 1975, commitments were also made to the Saudi Arabians, to provide them with advanced aircraft, to replace their present Lightning planes which are becoming obsolete.

Later in the Ford administration in 1976, in the fall, a commitment was made to them to send Defense Department officials to Saudi Arabia, to give them some assessment of the characteristics of the F-15s and F-6s with a commitment then made that they would have their choice between the F-16's and the F-15's.

When Crown Prince Fahed came to our country last spring, I repeated this commitment that had been made by my own predecessors in the White House and so the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia is consistent with the commitment also made in the fall of 1975 and repeatedly reconfirmed.

The sale of the F-5Es — a much less capable airplane, by the way — to the Egyptians is, I think, a very legitimate proposal because Egyptians in effect have severed their supply

of weapons that used to come from the Soviet Union and have cast their lot with us which is a very favorable development in the Middle East, one of the most profound developments of all.

I have no apology at all to make for this proposal. It maintains the military balance that exists in the Middle East. I can say without any doubt that the superior capabilities of the Israeli air force compared to their neighbors is maintained, and at the same time, it reconfirms our own relationship with the moderate Arab leaders and nations for the future to ensure that peace can be and will be maintained in the Middle East.

**Q.** Mr. Carter, on the same subject, we have seen reports in recent days from the Middle East from both Cairo and Jerusalem that in effect President Sadat's initiative has come to an end, that it has come aground. We also see reports from Jerusalem that Ministers in the Israeli government have decided that there is no deal to be made at this time. Could you give us your assessment of where this stands and where you think it is going to go?

**The President:** Well, as is the case in the White House and in the Congress, and in the United States, there is a difference in Israel, a very heated debate in prospect and already in progress about what should be done to bring about peace in the Middle East.

There are obviously differences also between nations, between Egypt and Israel, between Israel and their other neighbors. So I would say that in comparison to the situation a year ago, the prospects for comprehensive peace in the Middle East are quite good. We would hope that there could be an immediate resolution of all the differences, that is not immediately in prospect.

Prime Minister Begin will be coming to visit with me this coming week. I know him very well. I have met with him twice before. He is a very strong advocate, a very dedicated advocate of the position of the Israeli government. He is forceful and outspoken person. I am sure after our meeting, we will at least understand each other better.

I hope we can move another step toward peace. I had an equivalent opportunity this year to meet and to have long discussions with President Sadat.

I would say there has been a great deal of progress made. Just looking at the changes from the viewpoint of the Israelis, we have now the major Arab nation who has recognized Israel's right to exist, right to exist in peace, right to exist permanently, has offered the full definition of peace which I described earlier. They have been meeting directly and personally, Begin and Sadat and their representatives, which was not in prospect at all a year ago.

There are still differences between them — relatively minor differences in the Sinai, more major strategic kinds of differences involving the Palestinian question and the implementation of UN Resolution 242. So we have got a long way to go. It is a difficult question that has been one of the most challenging, I guess, in the last 30 years for the world, to bring about peace in the Middle East. But I am not discouraged about it. We are going to stick with it. And even if it takes a lot of time and much abuse and much debate and many differences expressed by all public officials, I intend to stay with it and I believe the American people are deeply committed to two things. One is the security of Israel under any circumstances, and secondly, the achievement of comprehensive peace.

**Q.** Mr. President, Mark Siegel, one of your aides, quit today and you accepted his resignation with regret. He cited as his reason differences with your Middle East policy.

His resignation, to many, symbolized the split in the American and Jewish community over the internal debate that is going on over our Middle East policy. And with Begin coming, I wonder if you could tell us what differences there are between the two of you, what

your position will be on these differences, and a comment on the report that you are going to pressure him to make significant concessions?

**The President:** I don't have any intention to pressure Prime Minister Begin. I don't have any desire to do it and couldn't if I wanted to. He is a very strong and independent person representing a strong and independent nation. Our rôle has been that of an intermediary. And one of the most pleasant respites that I have had since I have been in office was the brief time when Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat were negotiating directly and I was out of the role of carrying messages back and forth.

This is, however, a situation that has now deteriorated to some degree since President Sadat went to Jerusalem. Both the military and the political talks are now interrupted — we hope temporarily.

One of the things I will be doing is to repeat to Prime Minister Begin personally the request and the negotiating positions of President Sadat and we have tried to do this through our Ambassadors and through our negotiator, Mr. Atherton, in the Mideast and I think perhaps I can do it perhaps a little more effectively.

But the differences that exist between them are well-known. In the Sinai, as I said, they are relatively easy to resolve. The Jewish settlements, the placement of Egyptian forces in the Sinai and some continuation of Israeli control over some airfields or aerodromes and the rapidity with which Israel would withdraw from the Sinai itself.

In the West Bank, Gaza Strip, this involves implementation of U.N. Resolution 242 and some resolution of the Palestinian question. We do not and never have favored an independent Palestinian nation. And within that bound of constraint, how to give the Palestinians who live in the West Bank-Gaza Strip some voice in the determination of their own future, is an issue still unresolved.

That outlines very briefly the situation we presently are in.

**Q.** Mr. President to come back to the Dr. Siegel resignation, Dr. Siegel, as I understand it, resigned for two reasons; one, he was being asked to defend administration policy in the Middle East, and two, he was unable to affect the decision-making process within the White House.

Does his resignation cause you to have any doubts about his not being able to have played a more prominent role in forming that policy? And two, does it cause you to wonder about the entire decision-making process in the Middle East within the White House and its future implications.

**The President:** The answer to both your questions is no. Mark Siegel is a fine young man and an excellent employee and he has done his job well in the White House, dealing with one of the most difficult issues that I have had to face as President, an issue on which there is sharp disagreement in the White House, sometimes disagreements between myself and the Secretary of State or myself and the Secretary of Defense or myself and the National Security Advisor or myself and my own staff.

But we resolve those differences as best we can harmoniously, when there is continued disharmony, I make the final decision about the administration policy. But this is an issue that is almost inherently a subject for dispute and disagreement.

As I pointed out earlier, there is a sharp public dispute in the Israeli Cabinet itself, not limited to a difference between parties in Israel, and obviously there are sharp disputes between Israel and her neighbors. But I think we are now addressing these difficult but crucial issues which are easier, politically speaking, to leave alone in a proper fashion.

We are not trying to impose our will on anyone. But I have to say that within the White

House, when there is a continuing disagreement, that I make the final decision. That is what I was elected to do.

I think that Mark Siegel has had a strong input in his conversations and negotiating sessions with the Vice President, with Hamilton Jordan, with Dr. Brzezinski, and on occasion with me, not very often directly with me. But he has a perfect right to decide whether or not he prefers to continue performing that service. To explain his administration positions to very interested American Jewish groups has been a difficult task for me as well as him.

And I honor his right to make that decision. I don't think that we have a breakdown in communications and consultations within the White House, and after constant reconsideration, I believe that our policy on the Middle East is the proper one.

**133. Statement to the press by Prime Minister Begin on the massacre of Israelis on the Haifa — Tel Aviv Road, 12 March 1978.**

*On 11 March, eleven Palestinian terrorists were able to penetrate Israel's coastal defences; hijacking two buses they were stopped by Israeli security forces near Tel Aviv. Before being killed, they murdered 37 Israelis and wounded 76. In the wake of this attack, the Prime Minister decided to postpone his visit to the United States by one week. The day after the raid, he appeared before the press and made the following statement:*

(The first paragraph of the statement has been translated from the Hebrew version which preceded the English.)

The number of Israeli citizens — men, women and children — killed by the murderers is 37. The number of wounded is 76, including seriously wounded. Eleven of these murderers landed on the shores of Eretz Israel yesterday after having received instruction on how to perpetrate the task with which they were charged by one "Abu Jihad" — who is the head of the military wing of the organization known as Fatah, which is headed by Yasser Arafat. That very Yasser Arafat who had been welcomed enthusiastically by the plenum of the United Nations organization.

(end of translation.)

The boats in which the murderous terrorists arrived are of Soviet manufacture — known as "Zodiacs." (the Prime Minister later corrected himself, noting that these boats are in fact French-made.) and their weapons were mainly Soviet-made and Soviet-supplied. They included R.P.G. a light mortar, machineguns and sub-machineguns.

They came here in order to kill the Jews. They intended to take hostages, and threatened, as the leaflet they left said, to kill all of them if we do not surrender to their demands.

But they didn't carry out that design. Instead, they landed around Caesarea, met a young lady, questioned her, and killed her. They then proceeded — eleven in number — to the main road. They captured a taxi and killed the passengers. Then they captured a bus and ordered the driver to proceed in the direction of Tel Aviv.

En route they saw another bus ahead of them. They ordered the wounded driver to speed up and reach and overtake the second bus. When they reached that second bus, they

opened fire upon it, and killed and wounded other civilians. Then they alighted from their bus to the bus they overpowered, and forced the passengers of the other bus to leave it and go into the first bus which was already under the control of the killers.

Ultimately, they reached the Country Club, and there the road was blocked. They used their arms all the time, upon vehicles passing on both sides, killing and wounding people. Ultimately, when the bus was burned as the result of an explosion, probably by a hand-grenade thrown by one of the killers, the "Hevra Kadisha" (burial society) found in the bus 25 bodies, burned so that they are not recognizable and we don't know yet their identities.

The government of Israel expressed today to the bereaved families whatever can be said to console them in their grief — and may God console them in their grief. These are victims of the fight of the Jewish People for its life, for its dignity and liberty.

For years, we tried to explain to free public opinion in the world that this organization called "Fatah" or P.L.O." is one of the meanest, the basest armed organizations ever in the annals of mankind since the days of the Nazis. Their purpose is to kill the Jews: Man, woman and child. They never attack a military installation — they come to kill our civilians.

The original purpose of the design, or order, was to take hostages, to put out certain demands to the Government of Israel, and to threaten killing all of the hostages if we do not surrender to their demands. That they didn't achieve — but instead they started killing. But now we know the blood that was shed of innocent people: 37 Jews who were massacred again in our time.

As the vehicle of their attack was supplied by the Soviet Union — again I repeat the name: "Zodiac" is its name — and as the weapons mainly were supplied to that murderous Nazi organization by the Soviet Union: Let the rulers of the Kremlin ask themselves what do they do in our time. They saw what happened to the Jewish people in their country and in Europe in the forties, and now they supply murderous weapons, to wound and to kill the remnants of the Jewish people.

And let the free world stop for a while to think: It is only a short time ago that Yasser Arafat, the commander of "El Fatah" the so-called "P.L.O." was received enthusiastically by the General Assembly of the United Nations. And we must also not forget that at the Rabat Conference all the Arab countries around decided to declare that murderous Nazi organization the so-called "Legitimate and only representative of the Palestinian Arabs."

We shall not forget. And I can only call upon other nations not to forget that Nazi atrocity that was perpetrated upon our people yesterday.

I appeal to our citizens in the area in which there is still a curfew to be patient with it. It is for their own defence, because there were eleven killers: Six were killed, two were taken prisoner, but three probably are still free to threaten our population, and perhaps to try to take hostages amongst men, women and children.

Between two and five the curfew will be lifted. It will be re-imposed until tomorrow. It is for the defence of our people. And I call upon all our citizens there to bear it patiently. It is for their defence. As we can see, those killers will stop at nothing including an attempt to take children as hostages. We must defend our children. Until the security forces find out whether those three are still alive, and if they are, until the security forces catch them.

The President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the Secretary-General of the United Nations sent us messages of condolence. We thank them. Yesterday night Mr. Sam Lewis, the American Ambassador to our country, phoned me from Washington and informed me of the contents of the President's message. I am

grateful to the President for his words, and so we express our thanks to Prime Minister Callahan and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

I informed our Ambassador in the United States, and also the Chargé D'affaires in the American Embassy, that regrettably, the Foreign Minister and I will not be able during this week to go to Washington for our scheduled talks with the President, the Secretary of State and their advisers. I asked to inform the President that we shall be able, as we assume, to go next week. The exact date will be determined in the contacts between the two governments. I regret that we cannot go this week as scheduled for the important talks with the President of the United States, but I am sure he will understand. And during today or tomorrow, we shall have an announcement from the White House and the State Department about the new date of our meeting with the President and the Secretary of State.

Tomorrow the Government will make an announcement in the Knesset.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is the atrocity perpetrated upon our people yesterday. We shall not forget.

Translation of the Hebrew questions and answers at the press conference with the Prime Minister, Mr. Menachem Begin.

**Q.** To what extent, in your opinion, will the negotiations currently being conducted with Egypt be influenced by yesterday's events?

**A.** The fact is that for the time being the negotiations were terminated in accordance with the Egyptian government's decision. But we have communication with Egypt, and last night I even received a further note from the President of Egypt, Mr. Sadat. I informed the American Chargé D'affaires, who handed me this letter, that I would reply following my return from the U.S. — and so I will do.

If there is a desire in Egypt to conclude an agreement with Israel, and bring about peace between us — if there is such a desire, this bloody event should not preclude thorough negotiations for signing a peace treaty.

**Q.** Next week, when you are in the U.S. do you expect to discover greater understanding by the U.S. for Israel's position — after what happened last night in the terrorist attack?

**A.** I trust that in light of this bloody event, all persons of goodwill will appreciate our fundamental position vis-a-vis the demands voiced even nowadays in utter contempt for human intelligence, in betrayal of the magnificent human concept — dating to Woodrow Wilson — of self-determination for nations, will better appreciate our position, namely: It is inconceivable that in Judea and Samaria and in Gaza a state should be established that would be ruled by Yasser Arafat and his murderers. That is actually the demand presented to us nowadays as well in one form or another, at times directly and at others — indirectly. Our position is known. Were that to be the case — and we have said so these many years — our people would have been confronted by mortal danger and our state by a threat to its survival.

**Q.** What is the extent of the alertness displayed by the security authorities to prevent infiltration of murderers to Israel's shores, and what is the extent of the efficiency displayed by Israel's security forces against these murderers?

**A.** The entire issue (raised) in your question — will be examined.  
(here the Prime Minister inserted his correction vis-a-vis the "Zodiac" dinghies' country of manufacture.)

**Q.** In general terms, can you relate to the question whether the Government has

decided to take steps to restrict the terrorists' freedom of movement in neighbouring countries?

A. The Government should be left to take its decisions.

Q. Has last night's action led to a change of your evaluations, the negotiations being conducted for the attainment of peace in the region?

A. My views did not have to be reinforced by any murder. My views, to my knowledge, were the views of the majority of the people of Israel, and remain true — to defend our people, to maintain our security and secure the fate of our children. But I expressed the assumption that after this bloodshed, after this Nazi act of atrocity, people of goodwill will be found — in different parts of the world — who will better appreciate and understand our position.

Q. Has the Cabinet resolved that the funerals be state funerals? Will the Prime Minister attend some of them?

A. The I.D.F. "Hevra Kadisha" (burial society) will see to laying the victims to eternal rest. The members of the Cabinet, and I myself will attend the funerals.

Q. Do you view the murder of El-Sibaei... in Cyprus and yesterday's attack as a single complex, designed from both sides to eliminate President Sadat's and Israel's peace initiative?

A. I don't think there is any connection between these two bloody events... the murderers who came here did not hit any one known person. In Larnaca, they chose someone — true, President Sadat's personal friend — and killed him, and that is an atrocity. But when we speak of the bloody event here — as you can note, their entire intention was to kill the Jew for being a Jew. They encountered on the shore a young woman — as I have been told — 19 years old, who was innocently sitting there. They put questions to her and then killed her. Why? Because she is Jewish. Thereafter they boarded a bus, fired in both directions at every vehicle, to kill every passerby.

They came to kill Jews. They are Nazis, and perpetrated a Nazi deed. Had they been able, they would have destroyed all the Jews in Eretz Israel. But they are not, and will not be able.

And I now call on our people — in the homeland, in Eretz Israel, and in the Diaspora, this is a terrible day in our lives, but we must be strong. This brutal blood-lusty enemy wishes to break our spirit — he will not succeed. The Jewish people is a tested people in both enemy attacks and in suffering. It has overcome spiritually, and prevailed, and I call on all the Jewish people — be strong and of courage in these days. We shall overcome, with the help of the Lord, we shall overcome and secure the future of our children in our land. The security of our people, and make sure of conditions whereby no evil-doer will be able to raise his bloody hand against any man, woman or child in Israel.

Be strong and of courage. We shall prevail.

#### **134. Statement to the Knesset by Prime Minister Begin on the terrorist raid and the Knesset resolution, 13 March 1978.**

*In his statement to the Knesset, the Prime Minister castigated the governments and organizations who spoke of a moderation in the PLO. He said that gone are forever the days when Jewish blood could be shed with impunity. In his statement the Prime Minister*

*hinted that Israel "would sever the arms of iniquity." Text of the statement and the Knesset resolution follow:*

Mr. Speaker, members of the Knesset.

A day of bloodshed befell us last Saturday — a terrible day in the annals of our people that will not be forgotten. The entire nation mourns its fallen — men, women and children — who were cut down by murderers merely because of being Jews. Merely because of being citizens of Israel. But who or what will comfort the families that lost their dear ones. All those who were murdered were innocent sojourners, people who harmed no one, felled along the wayside by murderers who aimed at their heart — the Jewish heart. All that is left for us to say, following the eternal Jewish tradition: May the Lord comfort you among all the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and may you know no more sorrow. We extend to the wounded our wishes for a speedy and complete recovery.

Mr. Speaker.

The main facts about the bloody deeds on the bloody day have already been published, and I shall therefore confine myself to an absolutely concise recapitulation. The murderers came from Lebanon. They were briefed by the head of the military wing of the Fatah organization, the principal component of the organization calling itself P.L.O. — both commended by Yasser Arafat. These Nazis arrived by sea, being charged with the so-called "Mission": To seize hostages, and to present to the Government demands — accompanied by threats to murder the captured civilians. This they were unable to do. But from the moment they landed, they murdered Jews — just for being Jews. A young woman, to whom they put questions and then killed. They seized a taxi and killed its passengers. They seized a bus, and another bus and sprayed fire in every direction. All this, in order to kill Jews by virtue of their being Jews until the terrible, fateful encounter — and now we mourn our dead. Twenty-eight Jews — men, women and children — perished at the hands of the murderers.

I want the Knesset to know and note that in this battle, too, there were supreme acts of heroism — by civilians, policemen and soldiers. There was a battle inside the bus, Jews who had no weapons overcame the band of murderers, seized their weapons, and turned them on those scheming against the lives of other Jews. Policemen with small-arms rushed those who were armed with better weapons. And thus, thanks to self-sacrifice and Jewish heroism, not a single one of the murderers who came to perpetrate their plot in our country — escaped. I wish to laud the voluntary spirit of members of the Civil Guard. Over a short period, 5,000 members of the Civil Guard appeared, mobilized and guarded. All respect and honour to all those who thus served our people and thus defended our lives and honour. Needless to say, following such a bloody event, an investigation is called for — and there will be one by both military and civilian commissions.

Mr. Speaker

In the wake of this bloody deed, one of the worst atrocities of our times, it behoves us to look around — and as we do so, we shall see a terrible vision: Lack of humanity. Men, women and children fell victim to an attack by inhuman killers. (Yet) not a word of regret. No commiseration in the grief of the bereaved families, on the contrary: We hear the sound of rejoicing, of boasting. Lo, we are confronted by a phenomenon of lack of Godly or



human semblance, tones of bestial brutality are heard these days — while we nurse our dead.

But it behoves us also to direct our glances afar. Indeed, we accuse. Only three days ago that arch murderer was in Moscow, where he was honourably received. The ruler of the Soviet Union in person had a discussion with him. On what did they confer and on what did they talk? According to our most reliable information, dozens of courses for members of Fatah and those called P.L.O. have been held recently in the Soviet Union and other East European Communist countries in which Soviet experts taught how to use weapons, how to attack.

Yes. The P.L.O. collaborates with the Soviet Union — but graver by far is it to determine that the Soviet Union collaborates with the P.L.O. This major power, which promised justice, which saw the bloodshed of our people in Europe, nowadays instructs the murderers and provides them with lethal weapons of all kinds — including artillery, machineguns and all manner of other lethal weapons — in order, as we have again learnt last Saturday, to sow murder among the remnant of the Jewish people.

There are also democratic states in Europe and in other parts of the world in which there are — openly, for all to behold — offices of that murderers organization. Everyone knows what these offices engage in, and now, after the atrocity perpetrated against Israeli citizens — can any ruler in any country have any doubt about whom these countries are aiding and abetting in allowing the existence of these offices?

Yes, this is a murderers organization with many weapons and much money and many supporters — so that its tentacles are world-embracing, and it makes use of offices in free countries, too (inaudible) in order to prepare these atrocities.

We call on the democratic states — for we cannot penetrate the heart of totalitarian states — to put an end to this shameful situation. How can they continue to allow the existence of offices in which such acts of murder are plotted? We demand that they be shut down, and the expulsion from those countries of all those conspiring to perpetrate acts of murder against our people.

The Arab states met at the time in Rabat, and there, at that conference, decided to declare that organization which calls itself the P.L.O. the sole — and even legitimate — representative of the Palestinian Arabs. All the Arab states. They knew that that organization composed a manifesto according to which this country must disappear. The only country in the world against which, in this time, there is a writ of destruction, no such writ exists against any other country — large, small or tiny.

Nonetheless — and perhaps it is imperative to say as a result of this — all the Arab countries around declared that organization which openly proclaims that Israel must be destroyed, is the representative and there is none other of a civilian population in our land.

And let us also bear in mind: When that same head of the murderers organization arrived in New York, and appeared before the plenum of the United Nations organization, he was greeted by a standing ovation and with respect. Representatives of dozens of countries applauded him. We gazed at that abominable picture: It begged belief, what had happened to humanity? What was happening to the great international organization which emblazoned on its standard the aspiration for peace and justice and liberty? But that too, happened — and all those factors aided the murderers organization, encouraged it to go on planning the murder of our people.

It is from Jerusalem that we utter this writ of indictment against all those, in East and West, who, despite our repeated calls, voiced neither reservation nor condemnation, but

rather the contrary: Voiced encouragement and backing for the blackest organization — other than the Nazi murder organizations — ever to arise in the annals of humanity.

There is nowadays an organization in possession of large quantities of arms which it points at men, women and children. It attacks no person or place where there are soldiers, rather, it is determined to attack, to wound, to kill civilians — and none other than civilians. We cannot recall — except, as I said, the Nazi organizations — such a criminal organization.

Then came that bloody Saturday. We shall do what has to be done.

Mr. Speaker

Gone forever are the days when Jewish blood could be shed with impunity. Let it be known: The shedders of innocent blood shall not go unpunished. We shall defend our citizens, our women, our children. We shall sever the arm of iniquity. Under no circumstances, under no conditions will we acquiesce in a criminal's hand being raised against a Jewish child, a Jewish woman.

We shall do what has to be done to defend our people and to eradicate the inhumanity which is today the lot of peoples around us. But the countries that tolerate, and even encourage the murderers organization on their soil are accountable before God and man.

We call on our people to strengthen themselves in these terrible days of trial. This brutal enemy seeks to break our spirit in order to try to uproot us from our land. He will not succeed. No enemy will break our spirit. We are an ancient people: Much have we seen on our way. We are tried also in affliction, and we are aware of our goal — especially in the generation of the holocaust and survival — to secure the future of the nation in Eretz Israel, to defend this small nation with all the means at our disposal.

We call on the Jewish people in the homeland and in the dispersions: Be of sound spirit. We shall all of us prove to this cruel enemy that his design will not avail, that our people will continue to dwell in its land as a free nation, and will give its children security.

Mr. Speaker

These bloody acts will not break the courageous nation, and it will continue to follow the path determined by its history: The return to Zion and a life of liberty and dignity in Zion. With the help of God, we shall also overcome these enemies of humanity.

### **The Knesset resolution**

"1. The Knesset angrily condemns the bloody act perpetrated by the emissaries of the murderers organization called the P.L.O. whose victims were men, women and children. These peaceful civilians were cut down by a brutal enemy only because they were Jews.

"2. The Knesset expresses its condolences to the families whose loved ones fell on the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway and wishes the wounded a speedy and full recovery.

"3. The Knesset asserts that the terrorist organizations and their emissaries must be struck at to exterminate them.

"4. The Knesset calls on freedom-seeking nations to condemn this murderers organization, to withdraw any recognition of it, to close down its offices and to expel its representatives.

"5. The Knesset believes that the terrorists' attempts to frustrate the peace efforts in the Middle East will not succeed. The State of Israel will continue to indefatigably strive for true and durable peace."

### **135. Israel Defence Forces statement on the operation in Lebanon, 15 March 1978.**

*In the early hours of 15 March, Israeli forces crossed into southern Lebanon to wipe out PLO terrorist bases which served as staging area for attacks on Israel. The land forces were aided by the airforce and by naval units operating from the sea against PLO bases in Tyre and Sidon. Israel stressed that the objective was not retaliation for the raid on the buses but to protect Israel from incursion of terrorists. The Israeli forces would remain in Lebanon until 13 June 1978. Text of the IDF spokesman statement follows as well as a background paper on the aims of the operation:*

IDF forces a short while ago began a mopping-up operation along the Lebanese border. The purpose of the operation is — to root out the terrorist bases near the border and to strike at their special bases from which terrorists set out on missions deep inside Israeli territory. It is not the IDF's intention to harm the population, the Lebanese army or the inter-Arab force, but only the terrorists and their helpers, in order to safeguard the life and security of the population of Israel.

The objective of the operation is not retaliation for the terrorists' crimes, for there can be no retaliation for the murder of innocent men, women and children — but to protect the state of Israel and its citizens from incursions of members of the Fatah and PLO, who use Lebanese territory in order to attack citizens of Israel.

#### **IDF operation background paper.**

The IDF operation of the night of 14 March 1978 against concentrations of terrorists in Southern Lebanon comes in response to a long series of acts of murder and sabotage carried out by the Palestinian terrorists which reached their peak with the murder strike of Saturday, 11 March 1978. In this last act, the brutal nature of which shocked the entire world, 33 innocent Israeli citizens were indiscriminately cut down in cold blood and another 78 were wounded, most of them seriously. Among the victims were 6 women and 13 children.

There can be no shadow of doubt that the terror organizations, in their attempt to present their disgusting acts of brutality and murder as a war of liberation, are deliberately and in pre-meditated fashion planning their strikes against civilian populations and are even priding themselves on this. Thus for example, Habib Tarzi, the PLO representative to the United Nations, announced on Monday, 13 March, in the U.N. centre that terror attacks like that perpetrated on Saturday Israel will continue. PLO leader Yasser Arafat also stated explicitly on the same day in Beirut that some of the members of the terrorist team (the reference being to the murderers who penetrated the Israeli coast on Saturday) are still operating on the main highway to Tel Aviv. In this context, it should be noted that the Israeli authorities, wanting to prevent any further continuation of Saturday's bloodshed, imposed curfew on an entire area populated by 300.000 people.

Further confirmation of these objectives was given by Fatah intelligence department head (and central committee member) Salah Hālef — known as "Abu Iyad" — who said in an interview with "El-Arab" of Qattar on 13 March 1978 that there would shortly be further commando operations "In the style of the Tel Aviv operation." He even emphasized that these operations would be carried out "On the Northern shore of Falastin."

It is noteworthy that Lebanon has for some time served as the main "Hothouse" of the terror organizations. Israeli settlements have since the Yom Kippur war been bombarded 1,548 times by artillery. Katyushas and mortars — for the most part from Lebanese territory. In these attacks and in terror strikes resulting from penetrations from Lebanon, 108 Israeli citizens were killed — mostly women and children — and 221 were injured. The terrorists recently deepened their penetrations of Southern Lebanon and were reinforced by units of As-Aika (an organization operated by the Syrians). The number of terrorists at present in Southern Lebanon close to the Israeli frontier, is 5,000. They are housed and trained in bases and camps alongside civilian populations — this in the knowledge that the IDF is sensitive about harming civilian communities.

The IDF raid in the night of 14 March 1978, comes in order to guarantee the life and security of the residents of Israel to defend the state and its citizens, and to prevent the attacks of Fatah and P.L.O. members — who use Lebanese territory to attack the citizens of Israel.

### **136. Statement to the Security Council by Ambassador Herzog, 17 March 1978.**

*Explaining the reasons for the Israeli military operation in Lebanon, Ambassador Herzog said that it was ironic that both Israel and Lebanon wanted the same thing — namely, the complete withdrawal of foreign elements from that country and the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty in the area. Excerpts:*

Having failed, for thirty years to adopt a single resolution condemning the murder of innocent Israeli civilians, this Council long ago forfeited its right to pass judgment on actions stemming from terrorist outrages.

When tens of thousands (some 50,000 dead and 100,000 wounded) were being slaughtered and a million become refugees in the bloody war in Lebanon — during two years of continuing bloodshed — this Council did not meet even once.

With full-scale war raging in the Horn of Africa, the Security Council has remained silent.

Since 1968, we have witnessed some 1,500 separate acts of international terrorism throughout the world. Not once was the Security Council jarred into response.

This world organization showed where it stood last November when, ignoring President Sadat's momentous visit to Jerusalem, it chose to continue indulging in sterile condemnations of Israel. Indeed, neither the General Assembly nor the Security Council has yet issued one statement encouraging the peace talks and urging their extension to Israel's other neighbours.

The Security Council has seen fit to seat at this table the observer of the organization which openly and proudly proclaimed its responsibility for the cold-blooded and meticulously planned murder of children three and five years old, of a 14-year-old clarinetist, their parents, brothers and sisters, of a female photographer from abroad.

How can this body expect to retain any prestige or moral standing after inviting to its councils the observer of an organization that has announced that these inhuman acts would continue?

Israel has fought against terrorism in the past, at Entebbe and elsewhere, *and we shall not cease to do so until this cancerous growth that preys on innocent men, women and children is eliminated.*

How many nations assembled here today would be expected to respond quiescently when made the target of hundreds of attacks involving scores of civilian casualties — blown up, shot down, hijacked and terrorized? The solution adopted by Israel is that suggested by a Kuwaiti newspaper (following the seizure by PLO terrorists of a Kuwaiti plane last July), which concluded: *"The solution should be in the hands of Kuwait alone — in the use of an iron fist!"*

Therefore, Israel has struck against the terrorists, and — in the words of the Kuwaiti newspaper — *"the world will excuse us if we strike a painful blow in defence of ourselves and our security and stability."*

The PLO came in force to Lebanon, and proceeded to use it as a base for operations against Israel, after it had failed to overthrow King Hussein of Jordan in September 1970 — the so-called "Black September" — and after it was finally expelled from Jordan in 1971.

*The advent of the PLO brought misery, murder and disruption to the area — both for the Lebanese and for the Israelis.*

Following the inter-Arab bloodbath in Lebanon — a bloodbath which this organization chose, in its inimitable logic, to ignore — a state of total chaos developed in the southern part of Lebanon. The PLO has been acting just as it did in Jordan in 1970 until it was thrown out, bringing chaos and destruction and committing the most bestial atrocities against the Christian community in southern Lebanon. *This community of 50,000 souls — men, women and children — would have been completely annihilated... had it not been for the support and protection of Israel* and the creation of the "Good Fence" along the Israel-Lebanon border.

Since the end of 1973, there have been 1,548 individual acts of aggression arising out of artillery, Katyusha, mortar and infiltration attacks against Israel from Lebanon by these terrorists. In these attacks, 108 Israeli citizens, mostly women and children, were killed and 221 wounded. Last Saturday's senseless and brutal massacre on the Haifa-Tel Aviv road was but a further savage link in a diabolical chain of carnage and death.

The PLO's complete freedom of action is a function of its total disregard for Lebanese sovereignty, and of *the inability of the Government of Lebanon to exercise control over part of its own territory.* In October 1976 Ambassador Ghorra, then the Permanent Representative of Lebanon at the United Nations, described to the General Assembly in detail *"the constant Palestinian intervention in the internal affairs of Lebanon and the intolerable encroachment on its sovereignty."* He recalled that the PLO had not respected the many accords that had been concluded with them over the years to limit their presence and military activities in Lebanon. *"The Palestinians,"* he said, *"acted as if they were a state within the State of Lebanon, flagrantly defying the laws of the land and abusing the hospitality of its people... The PLO steadily increased the influx of arms into Lebanon... They transformed most, if not all, of the refugee camps into military bastions around our major cities, in the heart of our commercial and industrial centres, and in the vicinity of large civilian conglomerations."*

On 1 March 1977, about three months after the civil war in Lebanon had ended, Fuad Butrus, then Deputy Prime Minister of Lebanon, admitted to the Foreign Affairs and

Defence Committees of the Lebanese parliament that *his government no longer had any control over the situation*.

On 14 March 1978, the *Associated Press* reported that Butrus, now Foreign Minister of Lebanon, again explained to the US Ambassador in Beirut that *the Government of Lebanon had no control over the southern part of the country*.

In the light of this situation — the marked increase in PLO manpower and weaponry in the area and that organization's declared intention to repeat atrocities like the one carried out in Israel last Saturday — *the Government of Israel was left with no alternative*: it was compelled to act, in accordance with its legitimate national right of self-defence — the inherent right to defend its territory and population — and to ensure that no more barbaric attacks will be launched against it in the future.

The aim of the Israel Defence Forces operation was not revenge or retaliation — there is no way of avenging the lives of the Israeli civilians that were so pointlessly taken on Saturday. Moreover, the aim was not and is not to seize territory. *The aim was, and is, to clear out the PLO, once and for all, from the area bordering on Israel*.

We seek no Lebanese territory. We honour and respect the international border with Lebanon. *Our sole purpose is to remove the terrorist forces which have brought chaos, misery and destruction to southern Lebanon*. We wish to see the official central Lebanese authorities, backed by adequate force, return to the area now held by Israel forces. My government wishes to receive adequate guarantees that the *status quo ante* will not be restored.

The PLO is totally and irrevocably opposed to any peace with Israel. This position is deeply rooted in its destructive ideology and has been reaffirmed time and again, in addition to the Palestinian Covenant, which commits the PLO to the destruction of the State of Israel.

*This organization is largely discredited in the Middle East*. As President Sadat pointed out recently: *"The Palestinians should know that Egypt will retaliate one blow with ten blows."* Or, as *Al-Ahram* correctly wrote last month: *"Political terror is a cancer that must be eradicated."*

The PLO is not permitted to exist in Jordan. Syria, too, does not allow it to operate from its territory and exercises the tightest control on the PLO within Syria. The Syrian Ambassador will doubtless shed crocodile tears here and wax indignant about recent events in Lebanon — conveniently forgetting the slaughter of Palestinians by Syrian troops in the Lebanese civil war and the massacre of Tel el-Zaatar.

The Israeli action in southern Lebanon must be seen as part of the war against international terror, which knows no bounds and represents a danger to orderly society in every country in the world. It cannot be bad for some, and excusable for others. *It is either a wicked, dastardly, dangerous menace which threatens society and must be eradicated by all, or else it is something to be encouraged until it turns on those who encourage it*. No nation is safe from it.

This wicked, cowardly, bloodthirsty coalition of terrorists poses one of the greatest dangers for human society and the world. And this Council and this Organization have done nothing to discourage it. Let them at least not stand in the way of those forces which have committed themselves to the struggle against this international scourge, and which are not prepared to bow their heads to terrorism.

Let this Council, by its behaviour and by its reaction to these events, ensure that the forces of terror will not be encouraged, and that the sacrifices brought by Israel in the last few weeks will not have been in vain.













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